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WILLIAM THE TESTY.

Frontispiece.

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Van Twiller Edition

Knickerbocker's History of New York

By

Washington Irving

With Illustrations
by

Edward W. Kemble

Vol. I.

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK
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A History of New York

From the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty. Containing, among Many Surprising and Curious Matters, the Unutterable Ponderings of Walter the Doubter, the Disastrous Projects of William the Testy, and the Chivalric Achievements of Peter the Headstrong; the Three Dutch Governors of New Amsterdam, being the Only Authentic History of the Times that Ever Hath Been or Ever Will Be Published

by

Diedrich Knickerbocker

De waarheid die in duister lag,
Die komt met klaarheid aan den dag



Contents.

PAGE

ORIGINAL ADVERTISEMENTS xiii

THE AUTHOR'S APOLOGY 1

ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR 7

ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC 23

BOOK I.

CONTAINING DIVERS INGENIOUS THEORIES AND PHILOSOPHIC SPECULATIONS, CONCERNING THE CREATION AND POPULATION OF THE WORLD, AS CONNECTED WITH THE HISTORY OF NEW YORK.

CHAP. I.—Description of the World . . . 35

CHAP. II.—Cosmogony, or Creation of the World; with a multitude of excellent theories, by which the creation of a world is shown to be no such difficult matter as common folk would imagine 46

CHAP. III.—How that famous navigator, Noah, was shamefully nicknamed; and how he committed an unpardonable oversight in not

PAGE

having four sons; with the great trouble of philosophers caused thereby, and the discovery of America 61

CHAP. IV.—Showing the great difficulty philosophers have had in peopling America; and how the Aborigines came to be begotten by accident—to the great relief and satisfaction of the Author 72

CHAP. V.—In which the Author puts a mighty question to the rout, by the assistance of the Man in the Moon—which not only delivers thousands of people from great embarrassment, but likewise concludes this introductory book 84

BOOK II.

TREATING OF THE FIRST SETTLEMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF NIEUW-NEDERLANDTS.

CHAP. I.—In which are contained divers reasons why a man should not write in a hurry; also, of Master Hendrick Hudson, his discovery of a strange country,—and how he was magnificently rewarded by the munificence of their High Mightinesses 113

CHAP. II.—Containing an account of a mighty Ark which floated, under the protection of St. Nicholas, from Holland to Gibbet Island, —the descent of the strange animals therefrom,—a great victory, and a description of the ancient village of Communipaw . . 131

PAGE

CHAP. III.—In which is set forth the true art of making a bargain—together with the miraculous escape of a great metropolis in a fog—and the biography of certain heroes of Communipaw 142

CHAP. IV.—How the heroes of Communipaw voyaged to Hell-gate, and how they were received there 156

CHAP. V.—How the heroes of Communipaw returned somewhat wiser than they went—and how the sage Oloffe dreamed a dream—and the dream that he dreamed . . . 176

CHAP. VI.—Containing an attempt at etymology—and of the founding of the great city of New Amsterdam 184

CHAP. VII.—How the people of Pavonia migrated from Communipaw to the island of Mannahata—and how Oloffe the Dreamer proved himself a great land-speculator . . . 189

CHAP. VIII.—Of the founding and naming of the new city; of the City Arms; and of the direful feud between Ten Breeches and Tough Breeches 194

CHAP. IX.—How the city of New Amsterdam waxed great under the protection of St. Nicholas and the absence of laws and statutes—How Oloffe the Dreamer begun to dream of an extension of empire, and of the effect of his dreams 203

PAGE

BOOK III.

IN WHICH IS RECORDED THE GOLDEN REIGN OF WOUTER VAN TWILLER.

CHAP. I.—Of the renowned Wouter Van Twiller, his unparalleled virtues—as likewise his unutterable wisdom in the law-case of Wandle Schoonhoven and Barent Bleecker—and the great admiration of the public thereat . . 217

CHAP. II.—Containing some account of the grand council of New Amsterdam, as also divers especial good philosophical reasons why an alderman should be fat—with other particulars touching the state of the province . 232

CHAP. III.—How the town of New Amsterdam arose out of mud, and came to be marvellously polished and polite—together with a picture of the manners of our great-great-grandfathers 248

CHAP. IV.—Containing further particulars of the Golden Age, and what constituted a fine lady and gentleman in the days of Walter the Doubter 261

CHAP. V.—Of the founding of Fort Aurania—Of the mysteries of the Hudson—Of the arrival of the Patroon Killian Van Rensellaer; his lordly descent upon the earth, and his introduction of club-law 271

CHAP. VI.—In which the reader is beguiled into a delectable walk, which ends very differently from what it commenced 277

PAGE

CHAP. VII.—Faithfully describing the ingenious people of Connecticut and thereabouts—showing, moreover, the true meaning of liberty of conscience, and a curious device, among these sturdy barbarians, to keep up a harmony of intercourse, and promote population 286

CHAP. VIII.—How these singular barbarians turned out to be notorious squatters—How they built air-castles, and attempted to initiate the Nederlanders into the mystery of bundling 295

CHAP. IX.—How the Fort Goed Hoop was fearfully beleaguered—How the renowned Wouter fell into a profound doubt, and how he finally evaporated 304

BOOK IV.

CONTAINING THE CHRONICLES OF THE REIGN OF WILLIAM THE TESTY.

CHAP. I.—Showing the nature of history in general;—containing furthermore the universal acquirements of William the Testy, and how a man may learn so much as to render himself good for nothing . . . 317

CHAP. II.—How William the Testy undertook to conquer by proclamation—How he was a great man abroad, but a little man in his own house 326

PAGE

CHAP. III.—In which are recorded the sage projects of a universal genius—The art of fighting by proclamation—and how that the valiant Jacobus Van Curlet came to be foully dishonored at Fort Goed Hoop . . . 332

CHAP. IV—Containing the fearful wrath of William the Testy, and the alarm of New Amsterdam—How the Governor did strongly fortify the city—Of the Rise of Antony the Trumpeter, and the windy addition to the armorial bearings of New Amsterdam . . 341

CHAP. V.—Of the jurisprudence of William the Testy, and his admirable expedients for the suppression of poverty 349

CHAP. VI.—Projects of William the Testy for increasing the currency—He is outwitted by the Yankees—The great Oyster War . . 357



Illustrations

	PAGE
WILLIAM THE TESTY	*Frontispiece*
SUNNYSIDE	1
THE AUTHOR	9
"AND THAT A GREAT DRAGON OCCASIONALLY SWALLOWS UP THE MOON"	37
PROFESSOR VON PODDINGCOFT	43
THE GREAT EGG OF NIGHT	51
THE GOOD DAME OF NARBONNE IN FRANCE	53
"MOUNT ASTRIDE OF HIS TAIL, AND AWAY HE GALLOPS IN TRIUMPH"	57
FOHI THE HISTORIAN	63
HANS DE LAET	67
"SAVAGES TO EXTERMINATE"	70
THE PEOPLE OF NORTH AMERICA ACCORDING TO PETRI	77
"AS WHITE BEARS CRUISE ABOUT THE NORTHERN OCEANS"	81
"IT IS VAIN TO OFFER THEM MONEY; THEY SAY THEY ARE NOT HUNGRY"	89
"THEY INTRODUCED AMONG THEM RUM, GIN, AND BRANDY"	95

PAGE

THE SPANISH HAD THE RIGHT BY GUN-POWDER 99

THE HEADLESS MEN OF THE MOON VISIT US . 101

"WHO RIDETH ON THE GREAT BEAR AND USETH THE SUN AS A LOOKING-GLASS" . . . 105

MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER TAKES A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW FROM THE TOP OF A WINDMILL . . 115

HENDRICK HUDSON 119

"EVERY MAN WAS ALLOWED TO SLEEP AT HIS POST UNLESS THE WIND BLEW" . . . 123

"A RED MAN CROWNED WITH FEATHERS ISSUED FROM ONE OF THE GLENS" . . . 127

"THEY ONE AND ALL TOOK TO THEIR HEELS, AND SCAMPERED OVER THE BERGEN HILLS" 135

THE BROAD-MOUTHED LAUGHTER OF THE DUTCH NEGROES 139

"MADE THEM DRUNK WITH TRUE HOLLANDS" . 143

THE OFFICIAL WEIGHT 145

OLOFFE VAN KORTLANDT 147

TOUGH BREECHES 153

"THEY BADE FAREWELL TO THE GAZING THRONG UPON THE BEACH" . . . 159

"A SHOAL OF JOLLY PORPOISES CAME ROLLING AND TUMBLING BY" 161

"AND TURNING AWAY HIS HEAD, FIRED IT MOST INTREPIDLY IN THE FACE OF THE BLESSED SUN" 163

"ALONG THOSE SHORES" 169

PAGE

"AND ANON THEY SEEMED SINKING INTO YAWNING GULFS" 171

THE DEVIL SITTING ASTRIDE OF THE HOG'S BACK AND PLAYING ON A FIDDLE 173

TEN BROECK DRYING HIS BREECHES . . . 179

"IN DIM OBSCURITY HE SAW SHADOWED OUT PALACES AND DOMES AND LOFTY SPIRES . 181

MASTER JUET 187

MYNHEER TEN BROECK AS A LAND SURVEYOR . 191

THE ARGUMENT 199

THE SECRETARY 201

ST. NICHOLAS 207

COOLING THE ARDOR OF THE ENEMY . . . 209

HANS REINER OOTHOUT 213

"SET LIGHT-MINDED HEARERS IN A ROAR" . 223

WOUTER VAN TWILLER 225

THE JUDGMENT OF WOUTER VAN TWILLER . 229

THE FIVE BURGERMEESTERS 235

WELL-FED AND ROBUSTIOUS BURGHER . . 237

"HERE WOULD HE SMOKE HIS PIPE OF A SULTRY AFTERNOON" 243

"THE GOOD ST. NICHOLAS" 245

A COUNTRY MANSION 253

"SOME OLD CRONE OF A NEGRO" 255

"TOOK LEAVE OF THEM WITH A HEARTY SMACK AT THE DOOR" 259

"A VOLUMINOUS DAMSEL, ARRAYED IN A DOZEN OF PETTICOATS" 265

PAGE

THE YOUNG GALLANT 269

KILLIAN VAN RENSELLAER 273

THE BATTERY 279

"SCAMPERING FROM THE STORM" . . . 283

THE YANKEE'S SATURDAY'S DINNER OF DUMB-FISH 289

TARRED AND FEATHERED 293

"THE HORRIBLE MELODIES OF SOME AMATEUR, WHO CHOOSES TO SERENADE THE MOON" . 301

"BRISK, LIKELY, PLEASANT-TONGUED VARLETS" 303

JACOBUS VAN CURLET 307

THE PROTEST OF JACOBUS VAN CURLET . . 311

"HE PROCEEDED ON A LONG SWING-TROT THROUGH THE MUDDY LANES" . . . 313

THE POET AND HISTORIAN 319

WILLIAM THE TESTY 323

THE GREAT SEAL OF THE PROVINCE . . . 329

KIDNAPPING HOGS 333

"THE WHOLE GARRISON OF FORT GOED HOOP STRAGGLING INTO TOWN ALL TATTERED AND WAYWORN" 339

ANTHONY THE TRUMPETER 347

WILLIAM THE TESTY'S CURE FOR VAGRANCY . 355

STOFFEL BRINKERHOFF 363

Notices

WHICH APPEARED IN THE NEWSPAPERS PREVIOUS TO THE PUBLICATION OF THIS WORK.

From the Evening Post of October 26, 1809.

DISTRESSING.

Left his lodgings, some time since, and has not since been heard of, a small elderly gentleman, dressed in an old black coat and cocked hat, by the name of *Knickerbocker*. As there are some reasons for believing he is not entirely in his right mind, and as great anxiety is entertained about him, any information concerning him left either at the Columbian Hotel, Mulberry Street, or at the office of this paper, will be thankfully received.

P. S.—Printers of newspapers would be aiding the cause of humanity in giving an insertion to the above.

From the same, November 6, 1809.

To the Editor of the Evening Post:

Sir,—Having read in your paper of the 26th October last, a paragraph respecting an old gentleman by

the name of *Knickerbocker*, who was missing from his lodgings; if it would be any relief to his friends, or furnish them with any clue to discover where he is, you may inform them that a person answering the description given, was seen by the passengers of the Albany stage, early in the morning, about four or five weeks since, resting himself by the side of the road, a little above King's Bridge. He had in his hand a small bundle, tied in a red bandana handkerchief; he appeared to be travelling northward, and was very much fatigued and exhausted.

A TRAVELLER.

From the same, November 16, 1809.

To the Editor of the Evening Post:

SIR,—You have been good enough to publish in your paper a paragraph about Mr. *Diedrich Knickerbocker*, who was missing so strangely some time since. Nothing satisfactory has been heard of the old gentleman since; but *a very curious kind of a written book* has been found in his room, in his own handwriting. Now I wish you to notice him, if he is still alive, that if he does not return and pay off his bill for boarding and lodging, I shall have to dispose of his book to satisfy me for the same.

I am, sir, your humble servant,

SETH HANDASIDE,

Landlord of the Independent Columbian Hotel,
Mulberry Street.

From the same, November 28, 1809.

LITERARY NOTICE.

INSKEEP & BRADFORD have in press, and will shortly publish,

A HISTORY OF NEW YORK,

In two volumes, duodecimo. Price Three Dollars.

Containing an account of its discovery and settlement, with its internal policies, manners, customs, wars, &c., &c., under the Dutch government, furnishing many curious and interesting particulars never before published, and which are gathered from various manuscript and other authenticated sources, the whole being interspersed with philosophical speculations and moral precepts.

This work was found in the chamber of Mr. Diedrich Knickerbocker, the old gentleman whose sudden and mysterious disappearance has been noticed. It is published in order to discharge certain debts he has left behind.

From the American Citizen, December 6, 1809.

Is this day published

By INSKEEP & BRADFORD, No. 128 Broadway,

A HISTORY OF NEW YORK,

&c., &c.

(Containing same as above.)





SUNNYSIDE.

A HISTORY OF NEW YORK

The Author's Apology

THE following work, in which, at the outset, nothing more was contemplated than a temporary *jeu d'esprit*, was commenced in company with my brother, the late Peter Irving, Esq. Our idea was, to parody a small handbook which had recently appeared, entitled *A Picture of New York*. Like that, our work was to begin with an historical sketch; to be followed by notices of the customs, manners, and institutions of the city; writ-

ten in a serio-comic vein, and treating local errors, follies, and abuses with good-humored satire.

To burlesque the pedantic lore displayed in certain American works, our historical sketch was to commence with the creation of the world; and we laid all kinds of works under contribution for trite citations, relevant, or irrelevant, to give it the proper air of learned research. Before this crude mass of mock erudition could be digested into form, my brother departed for Europe, and I was left to prosecute the enterprise alone.

I now altered the plan of the work. Discarding all idea of a parody on the *Picture of New York* I determined that what had been originally intended as an introductory sketch, should comprise the whole work, and form a comic history of the city. I accordingly moulded the mass of citations and disquisitions into introductory chapters, forming the first book; but it soon became evident to me, that, like Robinson Crusoe with his boat, I had begun on too large a scale, and that, to launch my history successfully, I must reduce its proportions. I accordingly resolved to confine it to the period of the Dutch domination, which, in its rise, progress, and decline, presented that unity of subject required by classic

rule. It was a period, also, at that time almost a *terra incognita* in history. In fact, I was surprised to find how few of my fellow-citizens were aware that New York had ever been called New Amsterdam, or had heard of the names of its early Dutch governors, or cared a straw about their ancient Dutch progenitors.

This, then, broke upon me as the poetic age of our city ; poetic from its very obscurity ; and open, like the early and obscure days of ancient Rome, to all the embellishments of heroic fiction. I hailed my native city, as fortunate above all other American cities, in having an antiquity thus extending back into the regions of doubt and fable ; neither did I conceive I was committing any grievous historical sin in helping out the few facts I could collect in this remote and forgotten region with figments of my own brain, or in giving characteristic attributes to the few names connected with it which I might dig up from oblivion.

In this, doubtless, I reasoned like a young and inexperienced writer, besotted with his own fancies ; and my presumptuous trespasses into this sacred, though neglected region of history have met with deserved rebuke from men of soberer minds. It is too late, however, to recall the shaft thus rashly launched. To

any one whose sense of fitness it may wound, I can only say with Hamlet,—

> Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil
> Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
> That I have shot my arrow o'er the house,
> And hurt my brother.

I will say this in further apology for my work: that, if it has taken an unwarrantable liberty with our early provincial history, it has at least turned attention to that history and provoked research. It is only since this work appeared that the forgotten archives of the province have been rummaged, and the facts and personages of the olden time rescued from the dust of oblivion, and elevated into whatever importance they may virtually possess.

The main object of my work, in fact, had a bearing wide from the sober aim of history; but one which, I trust, will meet with some indulgence from poetic minds. It was to embody the traditions of our city in an amusing form; to illustrate its local humors, customs, and peculiarities; to clothe home scenes and places and familiar names with those imaginative and whimsical associations so seldom met with in our new country, but which live like charms and spells about the cities of the old world, binding the heart of the native inhabitant to his home.

In this I have reason to believe I have in some measure succeeded. Before the appearance of my work the popular traditions of our city were unrecorded; the peculiar and racy customs and usages derived from our Dutch progenitors were unnoticed or regarded with indifference, or adverted to with a sneer. Now they form a convivial currency, and are brought forward on all occasions; they link our whole community together in good-humor and good fellowship; they are the rallying points of home feeling, the seasoning of our civic festivities, the staple of local tales and local pleasantries, and are so harped upon by our writers of popular fiction, that I find myself almost crowded off the legendary ground which I was the first to explore, by the host who have followed in my footsteps.

I dwell on this head, because, at the first appearance of my work, its aim and drift were misapprehended by some of the descendants of the Dutch worthies; and because I understand that now and then one may still be found to regard it with a captious eye. The far greater part, however, I have reason to flatter myself, receive my good-humored picturings in the same temper in which they were executed; and when I find, after a lapse of nearly forty years, this hap-hazard production of my youth

still cherished among them,—when I find its very name become a "household word" and used to give the home stamp to everything recommended for popular acceptation, such as Knickerbocker societies, Knickerbocker insurance companies, Knickerbocker steamboats, Knickerbocker omnibuses, Knickerbocker bread, and Knickerbocker ice,—and when I find New Yorkers of Dutch descent priding themselves upon being "genuine Knickerbockers,"—I please myself with the persuasion that I have struck the right chord; that my dealings with the good old Dutch times, and the customs and usages derived from them, are in harmony with the feelings and humors of my townsmen; that I have opened a vein of pleasant associations and quaint characteristics peculiar to my native place, and which its inhabitants will not willingly suffer to pass away; and that, though other histories of New York may appear of higher claims to learned acceptation, and may take their dignified and appropriate rank in the family library, Knickerbocker's history will still be received with good-humored indulgence, and be thumbed and chuckled over by the family fireside.

W. I.

Sunnyside, 1848.

Account of the Author



T was some time, if I recollect right, in the early part of the autumn of 1808, that a stranger applied for lodgings at the Independent Columbian Hotel in Mulberry Street, of which I am landlord. He was a small, brisk-looking old gentleman, dressed in a rusty black coat, a pair of olive velvet breeches, and a small cocked hat. He had a few gray hairs plaited and clubbed behind, and his beard seemed to be of some eight-and-forty hours' growth. The only piece of finery which he bore about him was a bright pair of square silver shoe-buckles ; and all his baggage was contained in a pair of saddle-bags, which he carried under his arm. His whole appearance was something out of the common run ; and my wife, who is a very

shrewd body, at once set him down for some eminent country schoolmaster.

As the Independent Columbian Hotel is a very small house, I was a little puzzled at first where to put him; but my wife, who seemed taken with his looks, would needs put him in her best chamber, which is genteelly set off with the profiles of the whole family, done in black, by those two great painters, Jarvis and Wood; and commands a very pleasant view of the new grounds on the Collect, together with the rear of the Poor-House and Bridewell, and a full front of the Hospital; so that it is the cheerfulest room in the whole house.

During the whole time that he stayed with us, we found him a very worthy good sort of an old gentleman, though a little queer in his ways. He would keep in his room for days together, and if any of the children cried, or made a noise about his door, he would bounce out in a great passion, with his hands full of papers, and say something about "deranging his ideas"; which made my wife believe sometimes that he was not altogether *compos*. Indeed, there was more than one reason to make her think so, for his room was always covered with scraps of paper and old mouldy books, lying about at sixes and sevens, which he would never let anybody



9 THE AUTHOR

touch ; for he said he had laid them all away in their proper places, so that he might know where to find them ; though for that matter, he was half his time worrying about the house in search of some book or writing which he had carefully put out of the way. I shall never forget what a pother he once made, because my wife cleaned out his room when his back was turned, and put everything to rights ; for he swore he would never be able to get his papers in order again in a twelvemonth. Upon this, my wife ventured to ask him what he did with so many books and papers ; and he told her that he was "seeking for immortality" ; which made her think more than ever that the poor old gentleman's head was a little cracked.

He was a very inquisitive body, and when not in his room, was continually poking about town, hearing all the news, and prying into everything that was going on : this was particularly the case about election time, when he did nothing but bustle about from poll to poll, attending all ward meetings, and committee rooms ; though I could never find that he took part with either side of the question. On the contrary, he would come home and rail at both parties with great wrath,—and plainly proved one day, to the satisfaction of my wife

and three old ladies who were drinking tea with her, that the two parties were like two rogues, each tugging at a skirt of the nation; and that in the end they would tear the very coat off its back, and expose its nakedness. Indeed, he was an oracle among the neighbors, who would collect around him to hear him talk of an afternoon, as he smoked his pipe on the bench before the door; and I really believe he would have brought over the whole neighborhood to his own side of the question, if they could ever have found out what it was.

He was very much given to argue, or, as he called it, *philosophize*, about the most trifling matter; and to do him justice, I never knew anybody that was a match for him, except it was a grave-looking old gentleman who called now and then to see him, and often posed him in an argument. But this is nothing surprising, as I have since found out this stranger is the city librarian; who, of course, must be a man of great learning: and I have my doubts if he had not some hand in the following history.

As our lodger had been a long time with us, and we had never received any pay, my wife began to be somewhat uneasy, and curious to find out who and what he was. She accord-

ingly made bold to put the question to his friend, the librarian, who replied in his dry way that he was one of the *literati*, which she supposed to mean some new party in politics. I scorn to push a lodger for his pay; so I let day after day pass on without dunning the old gentleman for a farthing: but my wife, who always takes these matters on herself, and is, as I said, a shrewd kind of a woman, at last got out of patience, and hinted that she thought it high time "some people should have a sight of some people's money." To which the old gentleman replied, in a mighty touchy manner, that she need not make herself uneasy, for that he had a treasure there (pointing to his saddle-bags) worth her whole house put together. This was the only answer we could ever get from him; and as my wife, by some of those odd ways in which women find out everything, learnt that he was of very great connections, being related to the Knickerbockers of Schaghtikoke, and cousin-german to the congressman of that name, she did not like to treat him uncivilly. What is more, she even offered, merely by way of making things easy, to let him live scot-free, if he would teach the children their letters; and to try her best and get her neighbors to send their children also: but the old gentleman took it in

such dudgeon, and seemed so affronted at being taken for a schoolmaster, that she never dared to speak on the subject again.

About two months ago he went out of a morning, with a bundle in his hand, and has never been heard of since. All kinds of inquiries were made after him, but in vain. I wrote to his relations at Schaghtikoke, but they sent for answer, that he had not been there since the year before last, when he had a great dispute with the congressman about politics, and left the place in a huff, and they had neither heard nor seen anything of him from that time to this. I must own I felt very much worried about the poor old gentleman, for I thought something bad must have happened to him, that he should be missing so long, and never return to pay his bill. I therefore advertised him in the newspapers, and though my melancholy advertisement was published by several humane printers, yet I have never been able to learn anything satisfactory about him.

My wife now said it was high time to take care of ourselves, and see if he had left anything behind in his room, that would pay us for his board and lodging. We found nothing, however, but some old books and musty writings, and his saddle-bags ; which, being opened in the presence of the librarian, contained only

a few articles of worn-out clothes, and a large bundle of blotted paper. On looking over this, the librarian told us he had no doubt it was the treasure which the old gentleman had spoken about; as it proved to be a most excellent and faithful HISTORY OF NEW YORK, which he advised us by all means to publish, assuring us that it would be so eagerly bought up by a discerning public, that he had no doubt it would be enough to pay our arrears ten times over. Upon this we got a very learned schoolmaster, who teaches our children, to prepare it for the press, which he accordingly has done; and has, moreover, added to it a number of valuable notes of his own.

This, therefore, is a true statement of my reasons for having this work printed, without waiting for the consent of the author; and I here declare, that, if he ever returns (though I much fear some unhappy accident has befallen him) I stand ready to account with him like a true and honest man. Which is all at present,

From the public's humble servant,

SETH HANDASIDE.

Independent Columbian Hotel, New York.

The foregoing account of the author was prefixed to the first edition of this work. Shortly after its publication, a letter was received from

him, by Mr. Handaside, dated at a small Dutch village on the banks of the Hudson, whither he had travelled for the purpose of inspecting certain ancient records. As this was one of those few and happy villages into which newspapers never find their way, it is not a matter of surprise that Mr. Knickerbocker should never have seen the numerous advertisements that were made concerning him, and that he should learn of the publication of his history by mere accident.

He expressed much concern at its premature appearance, as thereby he was prevented from making several important corrections and alterations, as well as from profiting by many curious hints which he had collected during his travels along the shores of the Tappan Sea, and his sojourn at Haverstraw and Esopus.

Finding that there was no longer any immediate necessity for his return to New York, he extended his journey up to the residence of his relations at Schaghtikoke. On his way thither he stopped for some days at Albany, for which city he is known to have entertained a great partiality. He found it, however, considerably altered, and was much concerned at the inroads and improvements which the Yankees were making, and the consequent decline of the good old Dutch manners. Indeed, he was informed

that these intruders were making sad innovations in all parts of the State; where they had given great trouble and vexation to the regular Dutch settlers by the introduction of turnpike-gates, and country school-houses. It is said, also, that Mr. Knickerbocker shook his head sorrowfully at noticing the gradual decay of the great Vander Heyden palace; but was highly indignant at finding that the ancient Dutch church, which stood in the middle of the street, had been pulled down since his last visit.

The fame of Mr. Knickerbocker's history having reached even to Albany, he received much flattering attention from its worthy burghers, some of whom, however, pointed out two or three very great errors he had fallen into, particularly that of suspending a lump of sugar over the Albany tea-tables, which, they assured him, had been discontinued for some years past. Several families, moreover, were somewhat piqued that their ancestors had not been mentioned in his work, and showed great jealousy of their neighbors who had thus been distinguished; while the latter, it must be confessed, plumed themselves vastly thereupon; considering these recordings in the light of letters-patent of nobility, establishing their claims to ancestry,—which, in this republican country, is a matter of no little solicitude and vainglory.

It is also said, that he enjoyed high favor and countenance from the governor, who once asked him to dinner, and was seen two or three times to shake hands with him, when they met in the streets; which certainly was going great lengths, considering that they differed in politics. Indeed, certain of the governor's confidential friends, to whom he could venture to speak his mind freely on such matters, have assured us, that he privately entertained a considerable good will for our author,—nay, he even once went so far as to declare, and that openly too, and at his own table, just after dinner, that "Knickerbocker was a very well-meaning sort of an old gentleman, and no fool." From all which many have been led to suppose that, had our author been of different politics, and written for the newpapers instead of wasting his talents on histories, he might have risen to some post of honor and profit,—peradventure, to be a notary-public, or even a justice in the ten-pound court.

Beside the honors and civilities already mentioned, he was much caressed by the *literati* of Albany; particularly by Mr. John Cook, who entertained him very hospitably at his circulating library and reading-room, where they used to drink Spa water, and talk about the ancients. He found Mr. Cook a man after his own heart,

—of great literary research, and a curious collector of books. At parting, the latter, in testimony of friendship, made him a present of the two oldest works in his collection; which were the earliest edition of the Heidelberg Catechism, and Adrian Vander Donck's famous account of the New Netherlands: by the last of which, Mr. Knickerbocker profited greatly in his second edition.

Having passed some time very agreeably at Albany, our author proceeded to Schaghticoke, where, it is but justice to say, he was received with open arms, and treated with wonderful loving-kindness. He was much looked up to by the family, being the first historian of the name; and was considered almost as great a man as his cousin the congressman,—with whom, by the by, he became perfectly reconciled, and contracted a strong friendship.

In spite, however, of the kindness of his relations and their great attention to his comforts, the old gentleman soon became restless and discontented. His history being published, he had no longer any business to occupy his thoughts, or any scheme to excite his hopes and anticipations. This, to a busy mind like his, was a truly deplorable situation; and, had he not been a man of inflexible morals and regular habits, there would have been

great danger of his taking to politics, or drinking,—both which pernicious vices we daily see men driven to by mere spleen and idleness.

It is true, he sometimes employed himself in preparing a second edition of his history, wherein he endeavored to correct and improve many passages with which he was dissatisfied, and to rectify some mistakes that had crept into it; for he was particularly anxious that his work should be noted for its authenticity; which, indeed, is the very life and soul of history. But the glow of composition had departed,—he had to leave many places untouched, which he would fain have altered; and even where he did make alterations, he seemed always in doubt whether they were for the better or the worse.

After a residence of some time at Schaghticoke, he began to feel a strong desire to return to New York, which he ever regarded with the warmest affection; not merely because it was his native city, but because he really considered it the very best city in the whole world. On his return, he entered into the full enjoyment of the advantages of a literary reputation. He was continually importuned to write advertisements, petitions, handbills, and productions of similar import; and, although he never

meddled with the public papers, yet had he the credit of writing innumerable essays, and smart things, that appeared on all subjects, and all sides of the question; in all which he was clearly detected "by his style."

He contracted, moreover, a considerable debt at the post-office, in consequence of the numerous letters he received from authors and printers soliciting his subscription, and he was applied to by every charitable society for yearly donations, which he gave very cheerfully, considering these applications as so many compliments. He was once invited to a great corporation dinner; and was even twice summoned to attend as a juryman at the court of quarter sessions. Indeed, so renowned did he become, that he could no longer pry about, as formerly, in all holes and corners of the city, according to the bent of his humor, unnoticed and uninterrupted; but several times when he has been sauntering the streets, on his usual rambles of observation, equipped with his cane and cocked hat, the little boys at play have been known to cry, "There goes Diedrich!" at which the old gentleman seemed not a little pleased, looking upon these salutations in the light of the praise of posterity.

In a word, if we take into consideration all these various honors and distinctions, to-

gether with an exuberant eulogium passed on him in the *Port Folio*, (with which, we are told, the old gentleman was so much overpowered, that he was sick for two or three days) it must be confessed, that few authors have ever lived to receive such illustrious rewards, or have so completely enjoyed in advance their own immortality.

After his return from Schaghtikoke, Mr. Knickerbocker took up his residence at a little rural retreat, which the Stuyvesants had granted him on the family domain, in gratitude for his honorable mention of their ancestor. It was pleasantly situated on the borders of one of the salt marshes beyond Corlear's Hook; subject, indeed, to be occasionally overflowed, and much infested, in the summer time, with mosquitoes; but otherwise very agreeable, producing abundant crops of salt grass and bulrushes.

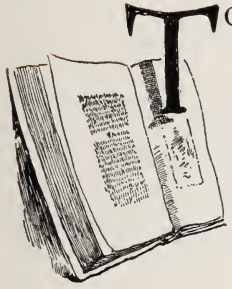
Here, we are sorry to say, the good old gentleman fell dangerously ill of a fever, occasioned by the neighboring marshes. When he found his end approaching, he disposed of his worldly affairs, leaving the bulk of his fortune to the New York Historical Society; his Heidelberg Catechism and Vander Donck's work to the city library; and his saddle-bags to Mr. Handaside. He forgave all his ene-

mies,—that is to say, all who bore any enmity towards him ; for as to himself, he declared he died in good will with all the world. And, after dictating several kind messages to his relations at Schaghtikoke, as well as to several of our most substantial Dutch citizens, he expired in the arms of his friend, the librarian.

His remains were interred, according to his own request, in St. Mark's churchyard, close by the bones of his favorite hero, Peter Stuyvesant ; and it is rumored that the Historical Society have it in mind to erect a wooden monument to his memory in the Bowling Green.



To the Public



TO rescue from oblivion the memory of former incidents, and to render a just tribute of renown to the many great and wonderful transactions of our Dutch progenitors, Diedrich Knickerbocker, native of the city of New York, produces this historical essay.* Like the great Father of History, whose words I have just quoted, I treat of times long past, over which the twilight of uncertainty had already thrown its shadows, and the night of forgetfulness was about to descend forever. With great solicitude had I long beheld the early history of this venerable and ancient city gradually slipping from our grasp, trembling on the lips of narrative old age, and day by day dropping piecemeal into the tomb. But a little while,

* Beloe's *Herodotus.*

thought I, and those reverend Dutch burghers, who serve as the tottering monuments of good old times, will be gathered to their fathers; their children, engrossed by the empty pleasures or insignificant transactions of the present age, will neglect to treasure up the recollections of the past, and posterity will search in vain for memorials of the days of the Patriarchs. The origin of our city will be buried in eternal oblivion, and even the names and achievements of Wouter Van Twiller, William Kieft, and Peter Stuyvesant, be enveloped in doubt and fiction, like those of Romulus and Remus, of Charlemagne, King Arthur, Rinaldo, and Godfrey of Bologne.

Determined, therefore, to avert if possible this threatened misfortune, I industriously set myself to work, to gather together all the fragments of our infant history which still existed, and like my reverend prototype, Herodotus, where no written records could be found, I have endeavored to continue the chain of history by well-authenticated traditions.

In this arduous undertaking, which has been the whole business of a long and solitary life, it is incredible the number of learned authors I have consulted; and all but to little purpose. Strange as it may seem, though

such multitudes of excellent works have been written about this country, there are none extant which give any full and satisfactory account of the early history of New York, or of its three first Dutch governors. I have, however, gained much valuable and curious matter, from an elaborate manuscript written in exceeding pure and classic Low Dutch, excepting a few errors in orthography, which was found in the archives of the Stuyvesant family. Many legends, letters, and other documents have I likewise gleaned, in my researches among the family chests and lumber-garrets of our respectable Dutch citizens; and I have gathered a host of well-authenticated traditions from divers excellent old ladies of my acquaintance, who requested that their names might not be mentioned. Nor must I neglect to mention how greatly I have been assisted by that admirable and praiseworthy institution, the New York Historical Society, to which I here publicly return my sincere acknowledgments.

In the conduct of this inestimable work I have adopted no individual model; but, on the contrary, have simply contented myself with combining and concentrating the excellences of the most approved ancient historians. Like Xenophon, I have maintained the utmost

impartiality, and the strictest adherence to truth throughout my history. I have enriched it after the manner of Sallust with various characters of ancient worthies, drawn at full length, and faithfully colored. I have seasoned it with profound political speculations like Thucydides, sweetened it with the graces of sentiment like Tacitus, and infused into the whole the dignity, the grandeur, and magnificence of Livy.

I am aware that I shall incur the censure of numerous very learned and judicious critics, for indulging too frequently in the bold excursive manner of my favorite Herodotus. And to be candid, I have found it impossible always to resist the allurements of those pleasing episodes which, like flowery banks and fragrant bowers, beset the dusty road of the historian, and entice him to turn aside, and refresh himself from his wayfaring. But I trust it will be found that I have always resumed my staff, and addressed myself to my weary journey with renovated spirits, so that both my readers and myself have been benefited by the relaxation.

Indeed, though it has been my constant wish and uniform endeavor to rival Polybius himself, in observing the requisite unity of history, yet the loose and unconnected manner in which many of the facts herein recorded have come to

hand, rendered such an attempt extremely difficult. This difficulty was likewise increased by one of the grand objects contemplated in my work, which was to trace the rise of sundry customs and institutions in this best of cities, and to compare them, when in the germ of infancy, with what they are in the present old age of knowledge and improvement.

But the chief merit on which I value myself, and found my hopes for future regard, is that faithful veracity with which I have compiled this invaluable little work; carefully winnowing away the chaff of hypothesis, and discarding the tares of fable, which are too apt to spring up and choke the seeds of truth and wholesome knowledge. Had I been anxious to captivate the superficial throng, who skim like swallows over the surface of literature; or had I been anxious to commend my writings to the pampered palates of literary epicures, I might have availed myself of the obscurity that overshadows the infant years of our city, to introduce a thousand pleasing fictions. But I have scrupulously discarded many a pithy tale and marvellous adventure, whereby the drowsy ear of summer indolence might be enthralled; jealously maintaining that fidelity, gravity, and dignity, which should ever distinguish the historian. "For a writer of this

class," observes an elegant critic, "must sustain the character of a wise man, writing for the instruction of posterity; one who has studied to inform himself well, who has pondered his subject with care, and addresses himself to our judgment, rather than to our imagination."

Thrice happy, therefore, is this our renowned city in having incidents worthy of swelling the theme of history; and doubly thrice happy is it in having such an historian as myself to relate them. For after all, gentle reader, cities *of themselves*, and, in fact, empires *of themselves*, are nothing without an historian. It is the patient narrator who records their prosperity as they rise,—who blazons forth the splendor of their noon-tide meridian,—who props their feeble memorials as they totter to decay,—who gathers together their scattered fragments as they rot,—and who piously, at length, collects their ashes into the mausoleum of his work and rears a monument that will transmit their renown to all succeeding ages.

What has been the fate of many fair cities of antiquity, whose nameless ruins encumber the plains of Europe and Asia, and awaken the fruitless inquiry of the traveller? They have sunk into dust and silence,—they have perished from remembrance for want of an historian! The philanthropist may weep over

their desolation,—the poet may wander among their mouldering arches and broken columns, and indulge the visionary flights of his fancy, —but, alas! alas! the modern historian, whose pen, like my own, is doomed to confine itself to dull matter-of-fact, seeks in vain among their oblivious remains for some memorial that may tell the instructive tale of their glory and their ruin.

"Wars, conflagrations, deluges," says Aristotle, "destroy nations, and with them all their monuments, their discoveries, and their vanities. The torch of science has more than once been extinguished and rekindled;—a few individuals, who have escaped by accident, reunite the thread of generations."

The same sad misfortune which has happened to so many ancient cities will happen again, and from the same sad cause, to nine tenths of those which now flourish on the face of the globe. With the most of them the time for recording their early history is gone by; their origin, their foundation, together with the eventful period of their youth, are forever buried in the rubbish of years; and the same would have been the case with this fair portion of the earth, if I had not snatched it from obscurity in the very nick of time, at the moment that those matters herein recorded were

about entering into the wide-spread, insatiable maw of oblivion,—if I had not dragged them out, as it were, by the very locks, just as the monster's adamantine fangs were closing upon them forever! And here have I, as before observed, carefully collected, collated, and arranged them, scrip and scrap, "*punt en punt, gat en gat*," and commenced in this little work a history, to serve as a foundation on which other historians may hereafter raise a noble superstructure, swelling in process of time, until Knickerbocker's *New York* may be equally voluminous with Gibbon's *Rome*, or Hume and Smollett's *England!*

And now indulge me for a moment, while I lay down my pen, skip to some little eminence at the distance of two or three hundred years ahead; and, casting back a bird's-eye glance over the waste of years that is to roll between, discover myself—little I—at this moment the progenitor, prototype, and precursor of them all, posted at the head of this host of literary worthies, with my book under my arm, and New York on my back, pressing forward, like a gallant commander, to honor and immortality.

Such are the vainglorious imaginings that will now and then enter into the brain of the author,—that irradiate, as with celestial light,

his solitary chamber, cheering his weary spirits, and animating him to persevere in his labors. And I have freely given utterance to these rhapsodies whenever they have occurred ; not, I trust, from an unusual spirit of egotism, but merely that the reader may for once have an idea how an author thinks and feels while he is writing,—a kind of knowledge very rare and curious, and much to be desired.





Book II.

CONTAINING DIVERS INGENIOUS THEORIES AND PHILOSOPHIC SPECULATIONS CONCERNING THE CREATION AND POPULATION OF THE WORLD, AS CONNECTED WITH THE HISTORY OF NEW YORK.



Chapter I.

DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD.

ACCORDING to the best authorities, the world in which we dwell is a huge, opaque, reflecting, inanimate mass, floating in the vast ethereal ocean of infinite space. It has the form of an orange, being an oblate spheroid, curiously flattened at opposite parts, for the insertion of two imaginary poles, which are supposed to penetrate and unite at the centre, thus forming an axis on which the mighty orange turns with a regular diurnal revolution.

The transitions of light and darkness, whence proceed the alternations of day and night, are produced by this diurnal revolution successively presenting the different parts of the earth to the rays of the sun. The latter is, according to the best, that is to say, the latest accounts, a luminous or fiery body, of a prodigious magnitude, from which this world is

driven by a centrifugal or repelling power, and to which it is drawn by a centripetal or attractive force ; otherwise called the attraction of gravitation ; the combination, or rather the counteraction of these two opposing impulses producing a circular and annual revolution. Hence result the different seasons of the year, viz. : spring, summer, autumn, and winter.

This I believe to be the most approved modern theory on the subject,—though there may be many philosophers who have entertained very different opinions ; some, too, of them entitled to much deference from their great antiquity and illustrious character. Thus it was advanced by some of the ancient sages, that the earth was an extended plane, supported by vast pillars ; and by others, that it rested on the head of a snake, or the back of a huge tortoise ;—but as they did not provide a resting-place for either the pillars or the tortoise, the whole theory fell to the ground, for want of proper foundation.

The Brahmins assert that the heavens rest upon the earth, and the sun and moon swim therein like fishes in the water, moving from east to west by day, and gliding along the edge of the horizon to their original stations during the night ;* while, according to the

* Faria y Souza. *Mick. Lus.*, note b. 7.



"AND THAT A GREAT DRAGON OCCASIONALLY SWALLOWS UP THE MOON."

Pauranicas of India, it is a vast plain, encircled by seven oceans of milk, nectar, and other delicious liquids; that it is studded with seven mountains, and ornamented in the centre by a mountainous rock of burnished gold; and that a great dragon occasionally swallows up the moon, which accounts for the phenomena of lunar eclipses.*

Beside these, and many other equally sage opinions, we have the profound conjectures of ABOUL-HASSAN-ALY, son of Al Khan, son of Aly, son of Abderrahman, son of Abdallah, son of Masoud-el-Hadheli who is commonly called MASOUDI, and surnamed Cothbiddin, but who takes the humble title of Laheb-ar-rasoul, which means the companion of the ambassador of God. He has written a universal history, entitled *Mouroudge-ed-dharab, or the Golden Meadows, and the Mines of Precious Stones.* † In this valuable work he has related the history of the world from the creation down to the moment of writing; which was under the Khaliphat of Mothi Billah, in the month Dgioumadi-el-aoual of the 336th year of the Hegira or flight of the Prophet. He informs us that the earth is a huge bird, Mecca

* Sir W. Jones, *Diss. Antiq. Ind. Zod.*
† MSS. Bibliot. Roi Fr.

and Medina constituting the head, Persia and India the right wing, the land of Gog the left wing, and Africa the tail. He informs us, moreover, that an earth has existed before the present (which he considers as a mere chicken of 7,000 years), that it has undergone divers deluges, and that, according to the opinion of some well-informed Brahmins of his acquaintance, it will be renovated every seventy-thousandth hazarouam ; each hazarouam consisting of 12,000 years.

These are a few of the many contradictory opinions of philosophers concerning the earth, and we find that the learned have had equal perplexity as to the nature of the sun. Some of the ancient philosophers have affirmed that it is a vast wheel of brilliant fire ;* others, that it is merely a mirror or sphere of transparent crystal ;† and a third class, at the head of whom stands Anaxagoras, maintained that it was nothing but a huge ignited mass of iron or stone,—indeed, he declared the heavens to be merely a vault of stone,—and that the stars were stones whirled upward from the earth, and set on fire by the velocity of its revolu-

* Plutarch, *De Placitis Philosoph.*, lib. ii., cap. 20.

† Achill. *Tat.*, *Isag.*, cap. 19. *Ap. Petav.*, t. iii., p. 81. Stob., *Eclog. Phys.*, lib. i., p. 56. Plut., *De Plac. Phil.*

tions.* But I give little attention to the doctrines of this philosopher, the people of Athens having fully refuted them, by banishing him from their city: a concise mode of answering unwelcome doctrines, much resorted to in former days. Another sect of philosophers do declare, that certain fiery particles exhale constantly from the earth, which, concentrating in a single point of the firmament by day, constitute the sun, but being scattered and rambling about in the dark at night, collect in various points, and form stars. These are regularly burnt out and extinguished, not unlike to the lamps in our streets, and require a fresh supply of exhalations for the next occasion.†

It is even recorded, that at certain remote and obscure periods, in consequence of a great scarcity of fuel, the sun has been completely burnt out, and sometimes not rekindled for a month at a time. A most melancholy circumstance, the very idea of which gave vast concern to Heraclitus, that worthy weeping philosopher of antiquity. In addition to these

* Diogenes Laetius in Anaxag., lib., ii., sec. 8. Plat., *Apol.*, t. i., p. 26. Plut., *De Plac. Phil.* Xenoph., *Mem.*, lib. iv., p. 815.

† Aristot., *Meteor.*, lib. ii., cap. 2. *Idem*, *Probl.*, sec. 15, Stob., *Ecl. Phys.*, lib. i., p. 55. Bruck., *Hist. Phil.*, t. i., p. 1154, etc.

various speculations, it was the opinion of Herschel, that the sun is a magnificent, habitable abode; the light it furnishes arising from certain empyreal, luminous or phosphoric clouds, swimming in its transparent atmosphere. *

But we will not enter further at present into the nature of the sun, that being an inquiry not immediately necessary to the development of this history; neither will we embroil ourselves in any more of the endless disputes of philosophers touching the form of this globe, but content ourselves with the theory advanced in the beginning of this chapter, and will proceed to illustrate, by experiment, the complexity of motion therein ascribed to this our rotatory planet.

Professor Von Poddingcoft (or Puddinghead, as the name may be rendered into English) was long celebrated in the university of Leyden, for profound gravity of deportment, and a talent at going to sleep in the midst of examinations, to the infinite relief of his hopeful students, who thereby worked their way through college with great ease and little study. In the course of one of his lectures, the learned professor, seizing a bucket of water, swung it

* *Philos. Trans.*, 1795, p. 72. *Idem*, 1801, p. 265. Nich., *Philos. Journ.*, i., p. 13.

around his head at arm's length. The impulse with which he threw the vessel from him, being a centrifugal force, the retention of his arm operating as a centripetal power, and the bucket, which was a substitute for the earth, describing a circular orbit round about the globular head and ruby visage of Professor Von Poddingcoft, which formed no bad representation of the sun. All of these particulars were duly explained to the class of gaping students around him. He apprised them, moreover, that the same principle of gravitation, which retained the water in the bucket, restrains the ocean from flying from the earth in its rapid revolutions; and he further informed them that should the motion of the earth be suddenly checked, it would incontinently fall into the sun, through the centripetal force of gravitation,—a most ruinous event to this planet, and one which would also obscure, though it most probably would not extinguish, the solar luminary. An unlucky stripling, one of those vagrant geniuses, who seem sent into the world merely to annoy worthy men of the puddinghead order, desirous of ascertaining the correctness of the experiment, suddenly arrested the arm of the professor, just at the moment that the bucket was in its zenith, which immediately descended with astonish-

ing precision upon the philosophic head of the instructor of youth. A hollow sound, and a red-hot hiss, attended the contact; but the theory was in the amplest manner illustrated, for the unfortunate bucket perished in the conflict; but the blazing countenance of Professor Von Poddingcoft emerged from amidst the



PROFESSOR VON PODDINGCOFT.

waters, glowing fiercer than ever with unutterable indignation, whereby the students were marvellously edified, and departed considerably wiser than before.

It is a mortifying circumstance, which greatly perplexes many a painstaking philosopher, that nature often refuses to second his most profound and elaborate efforts; so that

after having invented one of the most ingenious and natural theories imaginable, she will have the perverseness to act directly in the teeth of his system, and flatly contradict his most favorite positions. This is a manifest and unmerited grievance, since it throws the censure of the vulgar and unlearned entirely upon the philosopher; whereas the fault is not to be ascribed to his theory, which is unquestionably correct, but the waywardness of Dame Nature, who, with the proverbial fickleness of her sex, is continually indulging in coquetries and caprices, and seems really to take pleasure in violating all philosophic rules, and jilting the most learned and indefatigable of her adorers. Thus it happened with respect to the foregoing satisfactory explanation of the motion of our planet; it appears that the centrifugal force has long since ceased to operate, while its antagonist remains in undiminished potency; the world, therefore, according to the theory as it originally stood, ought in strict propriety to tumble into the sun; philosophers were convinced that it would do so, and awaited in anxious impatience the fulfilment of their prognostics. But the untoward planet pertinaciously continued her course, notwithstanding that she had reason, philosophy, and a whole university of learned professors opposed to her conduct.

The philosophers took this in very ill part, and it is thought they would never have pardoned the slight and affront which they conceived put upon them by the world, had not a good-natured professor kindly officiated as a mediator between the parties, and effected a reconciliation.

Finding the world would not accommodate itself to the theory, he wisely determined to accommodate the theory to the world ; he therefore informed his brother philosophers, that the circular motion of the earth round the sun was no sooner engendered by the conflicting impulses, above described, than it became a regular revolution, independent of the causes which gave it origin. His learned brethren readily joined in the opinion, being heartily glad of any explanation that would decently extricate them from their embarrassment ; and ever since that memorable era the world has been left to take her own course, and to revolve around the sun in such orbit as she thinks proper.

Chapter II.

COSMOGONY, OR CREATION OF THE WORLD; WITH A MULTITUDE OF EXCELLENT THEORIES, BY WHICH THE CREATION OF A WORLD IS SHOWN TO BE NO SUCH DIFFICULT MATTER AS COMMON FOLK WOULD IMAGINE.



HAVING thus briefly introduced my reader to the world, and given him some idea of its form and situation, he will naturally be curious to know from whence it came, and how it was created. And, indeed, the clearing up of these points is absolutely essential to my history, inasmuch as if this world had not been formed, it is more than probable that this renowned island, on which is situated the city of New York, would never have had an existence. The regular course of my history, therefore, requires that I should proceed to notice the cosmogony or formation of this our globe.

And now I give my readers fair warning that I am about to plunge, for a chapter or two, into as complete a labyrinth as ever historian was perplexed withal; therefore, I advise them to take fast hold of my skirts, and keep close at my heels, venturing neither to the right hand nor to the left, lest they get bemired in a slough of unintelligible learning, or have their brains knocked out by some of those hard Greek names which will be flying about in all directions. But should any of them be too indolent or chicken-hearted to accompany me in this perilous undertaking, they had better take a short cut round, and wait for me at the beginning of some smoother chapter.

Of the creation of the world, we have a thousand contradictory accounts; and though a very satisfactory one is furnished us by divine revelation, yet every philosopher feels himself in honor bound to furnish us with a better. As an impartial historian I consider it my duty to notice their several theories, by which mankind have been so exceedingly edified and instructed.

Thus it was the opinion of certain ancient sages, that the earth and the whole system of the universe was the Deity himself;* a doctrine most strenuously maintained by Zeno-

* Aristot., *Ap. Cic.*, lib. i., cap. 3.

phanes and the whole tribe of Eleatics, as also by Strabo and the sect of peripatetic philosophers. Pythagoras likewise inculcated the famous numerical system of the monad, dyad, and triad, and by means of his sacred quaternary elucidated the formation of the world, the arcana of nature, and the principles both of music and morals.* Other sages adhered to the mathematical system of squares and triangles; the cube, the pyramid, and the sphere; the tetrahedron, the octahedron, the icosahedron, and the dodecahedron.† While others advocated the great elementary theory which refers the construction of our globe and all that it contains to the combinations of four material elements: air, earth, fire, and water, with the assistance of a fifth, an immaterial and vivifying principle.

Nor must I omit to mention the great atomic system taught by old Moschus, before the siege of Troy; revived by Democritus of laughing memory; improved by Epicurus, that king of good fellows, and modernized by the fanciful Descartes. But I decline inquiring whether the atoms, of which the earth is said

* Aristot., *Metaph.*, lib. i., cap. 5. Idem, *De Cœlo*, lib. iii., cap 1. Rousseau, *Mem. sur Musique Ancien*, p. 39. Plutarch, *De Plac. Phil.*, lib. i., cap. 3.

† Tim., *Locr. ap. Plato.*, t. iii., p. 90.

to be composed, are eternal or recent; whether they are animate or inanimate; whether, agreeably to the opinion of the atheists, they were fortuitously aggregated, or, as the theists maintain, were arranged by a supreme intelligence.* Whether, in fact, the earth be an insensate clod, or whether it be animated by a soul;† which opinion was strenuously maintained by a host of philosophers, at the head of whom stands the great Plato, that temperate sage, who threw the cold water of philosophy on the form of sexual intercourse, and inculcated the doctrine of Platonic love,—an exquisitely refined intercourse, but much better adapted to the ideal inhabitants of his imaginary island of Atlantis than to the sturdy race, composed of rebellious flesh and blood, which populates the little matter-of-fact island we inhabit.

Beside these systems, we have, moreover, the poetical theogony of old Hesiod, who generated the whole universe in the regular mode of procreation, and the plausible opinion of others, that the earth was hatched from the

* Aristot., *Nat. Auscult.*, lib. ii., cap. 6. Aristoph., *Metaph.*, lib. i., cap. 3. Cic., *De Nat. Deor.*, lib. i., cap. 10. Justin Mart., *Prat. ad Gent.*, p. 20.

† Mosheim in Cudw., lib. i., cap. 4. Tim., *De Anim. Mund. sp. Plat.*, lib. iii. *Mem. de l'Acad. des Belles-Lettr.*, t. xxxii., p. 19, *et al.*

great egg of night, which floated in chaos, and was cracked by the horns of the celestial bull. To illustrate this last doctrine, Burnet, in his theory of the earth,* has favored us with an accurate drawing and description, both of the form and texture of this mundane egg; which is found to bear a marvellous resemblance to that of a goose. Such of my readers as take a proper interest in the origin of this our planet, will be pleased to learn that the most profound sages of antiquity among the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Persians, Greeks, and Latins, have alternately assisted at the hatching of this strange bird, and that their cacklings have been caught, and continued in different tones and inflections, from philosopher to philosopher, unto the present day.

But while briefly noticing long celebrated systems of ancient sages, let me not pass over with neglect those of other philosophers; which, though less universal and renowned, have equal claims to attention, and equal chance for correctness. Thus, it is recorded by the Brahmins, in the pages of their inspired Shastah, that the angel Bistnoo, transforming himself into a great boar, plunged into the watery abyss, and brought up the earth on his tusks. Then issued from him a mighty tor-

* Book i., ch. 5.

toise, and a mighty snake; and Bistnoo placed the snake erect upon the back of the tortoise, and he placed the earth upon the head of the snake.*

The negro philosophers of Congo affirm that the world was made by the hands of angels, excepting their own country, which the Supreme Being constructed himself, that it might be supremely excellent. And he took great pains with the inhabitants, and made them very black and beautiful; and when he had finished the first man, he was well pleased with him, and smoothed him over the face, and hence his nose, and the nose of all his descendants, became flat.



THE GREAT EGG OF NIGHT.

The Mohawk philosophers tell us that a pregnant woman fell down from heaven, and that a tortoise took her upon its

* Holwell, *Gent. Philosophy.*

back, because every place was covered with water; and that the woman, sitting upon the tortoise, paddled with her hands in the water, and raked up the earth, whence it finally happened that the earth became higher than the water.*

But I forbear to quote a number more of these ancient and outlandish philosophers, whose deplorable ignorance, in despite of all their erudition, compelled them to write in languages which but few of my readers can understand; and I shall proceed briefly to notice a few more intelligible and fashionable theories of their modern successors.

And first I shall mention the great Buffon, who conjectures that this globe was originally a globe of liquid fire, scintillated from the body of the sun, by the percussion of a comet, as a spark is generated by the collision of flint and steel. That at first it was surrounded by gross vapors, which, cooling and condensing in process of time, constituted, according to their densities, earth, water, and air; which gradually arranged themselves, according to their respective gravities, round the burning or vitrified mass that formed their centre.

* Johannes Megapolensis, Jun., *Account of Maquaas or Mohawk Indians.*

Hutton, on the contrary, supposes that the waters at first were universally paramount; and he terrifies himself with the idea that the earth must be eventually washed away by the force of rain, rivers, and mountain torrents, until it is confounded with the ocean, or, in



THE GOOD DAME OF NARBONNE IN FRANCE.

other words, absolutely dissolves into itself. Sublime idea! far surpassing that of the tender-hearted damsel of antiquity, who wept herself into a fountain; or the good dame of Narbonne in France, who, for a volubility of tongue unusual in her sex, was doomed to

peel five hundred thousand and thirty-nine ropes of onions, and actually run out at her eyes before half the hideous task was accomplished.

Whiston, the same ingenious philosopher who rivalled Ditton in his researches after the longitude (for which the mischief-loving Swift discharged on their heads a most savory stanza) has distinguished himself by a very admirable theory respecting the earth. He conjectures that it was originally a *chaotic comet*, which being selected for the abode of man, was removed from its eccentric orbit, and whirled round the sun in its present regular motion; by which change of direction, order succeeded to confusion in the arrangement of its component parts. The philosopher adds, that the deluge was produced by an uncourteous salute from the watery tail of another comet; doubtless through sheer envy of its improved condition; thus furnishing a melancholy proof that jealousy may prevail, even among the heavenly bodies, and discord interrupt that celestial harmony of the spheres, so melodiously sung by the poets.

But I pass over a variety of excellent theories, among which are those of Burnet, and Woodward, and Whitehurst; regretting extremely that my time will not suffer me to give

them the notice they deserve,—and shall conclude with that of the renowned Dr. Darwin. This learned Theban, who is as much distinguished for rhyme as reason, and for good-natured credulity as serious research, and who has recommended himself wonderfully to the good graces of the ladies, by letting them into all the gallantries, amours, debaucheries, and other topics of scandal of the court of Flora, has fallen upon a theory worthy of his combustible imagination. According to his opinion, the huge mass of chaos took a sudden occasion to explode, like a barrel of gunpowder, and in that act exploded the sun,—which in its flight, by a similar convulsion, exploded the earth, which in like guise exploded the moon,—and thus by a concatenation of explosions, the whole solar system was produced, and set most systematically in motion ! *

By the great variety of theories here alluded to, every one of which, if thoroughly examined, will be found surprisingly consistent in all its parts, my unlearned readers will perhaps be led to conclude, that the creation of a world is not so difficult a task as they at first imagined. I have shown at least a score of ingenious methods in which a world could be con-

* Darw., *Bot. Garden*, Part I., Cant. i., 1, 105.

structed ; and I have no doubt, that, had any of the philosophers above quoted the use of a good manageable comet, and the philosophical warehouse *chaos* at his command, he would engage to manufacture a planet as good, or, if you would take his word for it, better than this we inhabit.

And here I cannot help noticing the kindness of Providence, in creating comets for the great relief of bewildered philosophers. By their assistance more sudden evolutions and transitions are effected in the system of nature than are wrought in a pantomimic exhibition by the wonder-working sword of Harlequin. Should one of our modern sages, in his theoretical flights among the stars, ever find himself lost in the clouds, and in danger of tumbling into the abyss of nonsense and absurdity, he has but to seize a comet by the beard, mount astride of his tail, and away he gallops in triumph, like an enchanter on his hyppogriff, or a Connecticut witch on her broomstick, "to sweep the cobwebs out of the sky."

It is an old and vulgar saying about a "beggar on horseback," which I would not for the world have applied to these reverend philosophers ; but I must confess that some of them, when they are mounted on one of those fiery

steeds, are as wild in their curvetings as was Phaeton of yore, when he aspired to manage the chariot of Phœbus. One drives his comet



"MOUNT ASTRIDE OF HIS TAIL, AND AWAY HE GALLOPS IN TRIUMPH."

at full speed against the sun, and knocks the world out of him with the mighty concussion; another, more moderate, makes his comet a kind of beast of burden, carrying the sun a

regular supply of food and fagots; a third, of more combustible disposition, threatens to throw his comet, like a bomb-shell, into the world, and blow it up like a powder-magazine; while a fourth, with no great delicacy to this planet and its inhabitants, insinuates that some day or other his comet—my modest pen blushes while I write it—shall absolutely turn tail upon our world, and deluge it with water! Surely, as I have already observed, comets were bountifully provided by Providence for the benefit of philosophers, to assist them in manufacturing theories.

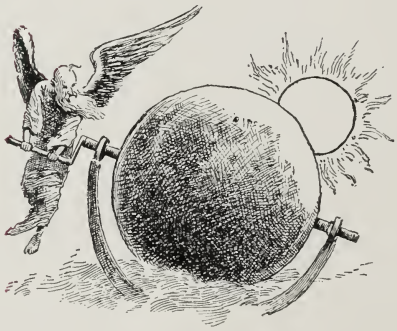
And now, having adduced several of the most prominent theories that occur to my recollection, I leave my judicious readers at full liberty to choose among them. They are all serious speculations of learned men,—all differ essentially from each other,—and all have the same title to belief. It has ever been the task of one race of philosophers to demolish the works of their predecessors, and elevate more splendid fantasies in their stead, which in their turn are demolished and replaced by the air-castles of a succeeding generation. Thus it would seem that knowledge and genius, of which we make such great parade, consist but in detecting the errors and absurdities of those who have gone before, and devising

new errors and absurdities, to be detected by those who are to come after us. Theories are the mighty soap-bubbles with which the grown-up children of science amuse themselves,—while the honest vulgar stand gazing in stupid admiration, and dignify these learned vagaries with the name of wisdom! Surely, Socrates was right in his opinion, that philosophers are but a soberer sort of madman, busying themselves in things totally incomprehensible, or which, if they could be comprehended, would be found not worthy the trouble of discovery.

For my own part, until the learned have come to an agreement among themselves, I shall content myself with the account handed down to us by Moses; in which I do but follow the example of our ingenious neighbors of Connecticut; who at their first settlement proclaimed, that the colony should be governed by the laws of God—until they had time to make better.

One thing, however, appears certain,—from the unanimous authority of the before-quoted philosophers, supported by the evidence of our own senses (which, though very apt to deceive us, may be cautiously admitted as additional testimony)—it appears, I say, and I make the assertion deliberately, without fear of contradiction, that this globe really *was created*, and

that it is composed of *land and water*. It further appears that it is curiously divided and parcelled out into continents and islands, among which I boldly declare the renowned ISLAND OF NEW YORK will be found by any one who seeks for it in its proper place.



Chapter III.

HOW THAT FAMOUS NAVIGATOR, NOAH, WAS SHAMEFULLY NICKNAMED, AND HOW HE COMMITTED AN UNPARDONABLE OVERSIGHT IN NOT HAVING FOUR SONS; WITH THE GREAT TROUBLE OF PHILOSOPHERS CAUSED THEREBY, AND THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA.



NOAH, who is the first seafaring man we read of, begat three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japhet. Authors, it is true, are not wanting, who affirm that the patriarch had a number of other children. Thus, Berosus makes him father of the gigantic Titans; Methodius gives him a son called Jonithus, or Jonicus; and others have mentioned a son, named Thuiscon, from whom descended the Teutons or Teutonic, or in other words, the Dutch nation.

I regret exceedingly that the nature of my plan will not permit me to gratify the laudable curiosity of my readers, by investigating minutely the history of the great Noah. Indeed, such an undertaking would be attended with more trouble than many people would imagine, for the good old patriarch seems to have been a great traveller in his day, and to have passed under a different name in every country that he visited. The Chaldeans, for instance, give us his story, merely altering his name into Xisuthrus,—a trivial alteration, which, to an historian skilled in etymologies, will appear wholly unimportant. It appears, likewise, that he had exchanged his tarpaulin and quadrant among the Chaldeans for the gorgeous insignia of royalty, and appears as a monarch in their annals. The Egyptians celebrate him under the name of Osiris; the Indians as Menu; the Greek and Roman writers confound him with Ogyges, and the Theban with Deucalion and Saturn. But the Chinese, who deservedly rank among the most extensive and authentic historians, inasmuch as they have known the world much longer than any one else, declare that Noah was no other than Fohi; and what gives this assertion some air of credibility is, that it is a fact, admitted by the most enlightened *literati*, that Noah travelled into China, at the time of

the building of the tower of Babel (probably to improve himself in the study of languages), and the learned Dr. Shackford gives us the additional information, that the ark rested on a mountain on the frontiers of China.



FOHI THE HISTORIAN.

From this mass of rational conjectures and sage hypotheses, many satisfactory deductions might be drawn; but I shall content myself with the simple fact stated in the Bible, viz.: that Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japhet. It is astonishing on what remote and ob-

scure contingencies the great affairs of this world depend, and how events the most distant, and to the common observer unconnected, are inevitably consequent the one to the other. It remains to the philosopher to discover these mysterious affinities, and it is the proudest triumph of his skill, to detect and drag forth some latent chain of causation which at first sight appears a paradox to the inexperienced observer. Thus many of my readers will doubtless wonder what connection the family of Noah can possibly have with this history,—and many will stare when informed that the whole history of this quarter of the world has taken its character and course from the simple circumstance of the patriarch's having but three sons. But to explain :

Noah, we are told by sundry very credible historians, becoming sole surviving heir and proprietor of the earth, in fee-simple, after the deluge, like a good father, portioned out his estate among his children. To Shem he gave Asia ; to Ham, Africa ; and to Japhet, Europe. Now it is a thousand times to be lamented that he had but three sons, for had there been a fourth, he would doubtless have inherited America ; which, of course, would have been dragged forth from its obscurity on the occasion ; and thus many a hard-working historian

and philosopher would have been spared a prodigious mass of weary conjecture respecting the first discovery and population of this country. Noah, however, having provided for his three sons, looked in all probability upon our country as a mere wild unsettled land, and said nothing about it; and to this unpardonable taciturnity of the patriarch may we ascribe the misfortune that America did not come into the world as early as the other quarters of the globe.

It is true, some writers have vindicated him from this misconduct towards posterity, and asserted that he really did discover America. Thus it was the opinion of Mark Lescarbot, a French writer, possessed of that ponderosity of thought and profoundness of reflection so peculiar to his nation, that the immediate descendants of Noah peopled this quarter of the globe, and that the old patriarch himself, who still retained a passion for the seafaring life, superintended the transmigration. The pious and enlightened father Charlevoix, a French Jesuit, remarkable for his aversion to the marvellous, common to all great travellers, is conclusively of the same opinion; nay, he goes still farther, and decides upon the manner in which the discovery was effected, which was by sea, and under the immediate direction of

the great Noah. "I have already observed," exclaims the good father, in a tone of becoming indignation, "that it is an arbitrary supposition that the grandchildren of Noah were not able to penetrate into the new world, or that they never thought of it. In effect, I can see no reason that can justify such a notion. Who can seriously believe that Noah and his immediate descendants knew less than we do, and that the builder and pilot of the greatest ship that ever was,—a ship which was formed to traverse an unbounded ocean, and had so many shoals and quicksands to guard against, —should be ignorant of, or should not have communicated to his descendants the art of sailing on the ocean?" Therefore, they did sail on the ocean; therefore, they sailed to America; therefore, America, was discovered by Noah!

Now all this exquisite chain of reasoning, which is so strikingly characteristic of the good father, being addressed to the faith, rather than the understanding, is flatly opposed by Hans de Laet, who declares it a real and most ridiculous paradox to suppose that Noah ever entertained the thought of discovering America; and as Hans is a Dutch writer, I am inclined to believe he must have been much better acquainted with the worthy crew of the

ark than his competitors, and of course possessed of more accurate sources of information. It is astonishing how intimate historians do daily become with the patriarchs and other great men of antiquity. As intimacy improves



HANS DE LAET.

with time, and as the learned are particularly inquisitive and familiar in their acquaintance with the ancients, I should not be surprised if some future writers should gravely give us a picture of men and manners as they existed before the flood, far more copious and accurate

than the Bible ; and that in the course of another century the log-book of the good Noah should be as current among historians as the voyages of Captain Cook, or the renowned history of Robinson Crusoe.

I shall not occupy my time by discussing the huge mass of additional suppositions, conjectures, and probabilities respecting the first discovery of this country, with which unhappy historians overload themselves, in their endeavors to satisfy the doubts of an incredulous world. It is painful to see these laborious wights panting, and toiling, and sweating, under an enormous burden, at the very outset of their works, which, on being opened, turns out to be nothing but a mighty bundle of straw. As, however, by unwearied assiduity, they seem to have established the fact, to the satisfaction of all the world, that this country *has been discovered*, I shall avail myself of their useful labors to be extremely brief upon this point.

I shall not, therefore, stop to inquire whether America was first discovered by a wandering vessel of that celebrated Phœnician fleet, which, according to Herodotus, circumnavigated Africa ; or by that Carthaginian expedition, which Pliny the naturalist informs us discovered the Canary Islands ; or whether

it was settled by a temporary colony from Tyre, as hinted by Aristotle and Seneca. I shall neither inquire whether it was first discovered by the Chinese, as Vossius with great shrewdness advances ; nor by the Norwegians in 1002, under Biorn ; nor by Behem, the German navigator, as Mr. Otto has endeavored to prove to the *savans* of the learned city of Philadelphia.

Nor shall I investigate the more modern claims of the Welsh, founded on the voyage of Prince Madoc in the eleventh century, who having never returned, it has since been wisely concluded that he must have gone to America, and that for a plain reason,—if he did not go there, where else could he have gone ?—a question which most socratically shuts out all further dispute.

Laying aside, therefore, all the conjectures above mentioned, with a multitude of others, equally satisfactory, I shall take for granted the vulgar opinion, that America was discovered on the 12th of October, 1492, by Christoval Colon, a Genoese, who has been clumsily nicknamed Columbus, but for what reason I cannot discern. Of the voyages and adventures of this Colon, I shall say nothing, seeing that they are already sufficiently known. Nor shall I undertake to prove that this country

should have been called Colonia, after his name, that being notoriously self-evident.

Having thus happily got my readers on this side of the Atlantic, I picture them to myself all impatience to enter upon the enjoyment of the land of promise, and in full expectation



"SAVAGES TO EXTERMINATE."

that I will immediately deliver it into their possession. But if I do may I ever forfeit the reputation of a regular-bred historian! No—no,—most curious and thrice learned readers (for thrice learned ye are if ye have read all that has gone before, and nine times learned

shall ye be if ye read that which comes after), we have yet a world of work before us. Think you the first discoverers of this fair quarter of the globe had nothing to do but go on shore and find a country ready laid out and cultivated like a garden, wherein they might revel at their ease? No such thing: they had forests to cut down, underwood to grub up, marshes to drain, and savages to exterminate.

In like manner, I have sundry doubts to clear away, questions to resolve, and paradoxes to explain, before I permit you to range at random; but these difficulties once overcome, we shall be enabled to jog on right merrily through the rest of our history. Thus my work shall, in a manner, echo the nature of the subject, in the same manner as the sound of poetry has been found by certain shrewd critics to echo the sense,—this being an improvement in history which I claim the merit of having invented.

Chapter IV.

SHOWING THE GREAT DIFFICULTY PHILOSOPHERS HAVE HAD IN PEOPLING AMERICA; AND HOW THE ABORIGINES CAME TO BE BEGOTTEN BY ACCIDENT—TO THE GREAT RELIEF AND SATISFACTION OF THE AUTHOR.



THE next inquiry at which we arrive in the regular course of our history is to ascertain, if possible, how this country was originally peopled, — a point fruitful of incredible embarrassments; for unless we prove that the Aborigines did absolutely come from somewhere, it will be immediately asserted, in this age of skepticism, that they did not come at all; and if they did not come at all, then was this country never populated,—a conclusion perfectly agreeable to the rules of logic, but wholly irreconcilable to every feeling of humanity, inasmuch as it must syllogisti-

cally prove fatal to the innumerable Aborigines of this populous region.

To avert so dire a sophism, and to rescue from logical annihilation so many millions of fellow-creatures, how many wings of geese have been plundered! what oceans of ink have been benevolently drained! and how many capacious heads of learned historians have been addled, and forever confounded! I pause with reverential awe, when I contemplate the ponderous tomes, in different languages, with which they have endeavored to solve this question, so important to the happiness of society, but so involved in clouds of impenetrable obscurity.

Historian after historian has engaged in the endless circle of hypothetical argument, and after leading us a weary chase through octavos, quartos, and folios, has let us out at the end of his work just as wise as we were at the beginning. It was doubtless some philosophical wild-goose chase of the kind that made the old poet Macrobius rail in such a passion at curiosity, which he anathematizes most heartily as "an irksome agonizing care, a superstitious industry about unprofitable things, an itching humor to see what is not to be seen, and to be doing what signifies nothing when it is done." But to proceed.

Of the claims of the children of Noah to the original population of this country I shall say nothing, as they have already been touched upon in my last chapter. The claimants next in celebrity are the descendants of Abraham. Thus, Christoval Colon (vulgarly called Columbus) when he first discovered the gold mines of Hispaniola, immediately concluded, with a shrewdness that would have done honor to a philosopher, that he had found the ancient Ophir, from whence Solomon procured the gold for embellishing the temple at Jerusalem; nay, Colon even imagined that he saw the remains of furnaces of veritable Hebraic construction, employed in refining the precious ore.

So golden a conjecture, tinctured with such fascinating extravagance, was too tempting not to be immediately snapped at by the gudgeons of learning; and, accordingly, there were divers profound writers ready to swear to its correctness, and to bring in their usual load of authorities, and wise surmises, wherewithal to prop it up. Vetablus and Robertus Stephens declared nothing could be more clear; Arius Montanus, without the least hesitation, asserts that Mexico was the true Ophir, and the Jews the early settlers of the country; while Possevin, Becan, and several other sagacious writ-

ers, lug in a *supposed* prophecy of the fourth book of Esdras, which being inserted in the mighty hypothesis, like the key-stone of an arch, gives it, in their opinion, perpetual durability.

Scarce, however, have they completed their goodly superstructure, than in trudges a phalanx of opposite authors, with Hans de Laet, the great Dutchman, at their head, and at one blow tumbles the whole fabric about their ears. Hans, in fact, contradicts outright all the Israelitish claims to the first settlement of this country, attributing all those equivocal symptoms, and traces of Christianity and Judaism, which have been said to be found in divers provinces of the new world, to the *Devil*, who has always affected to counterfeit the worship of the true Deity. "A remark," says the knowing old Padre d'Acosta, "made by all good authors who have spoken of the religion of nations newly discovered, and founded besides on the authority of the *fathers of the church*." Some writers, again, among whom it is with much regret I am compelled to mention Lopez de Gomara, and Juan de Leri, insinuate that the Canaanites, being driven from the land of promise by the Jews, were seized with such a panic that they fled without looking behind them, until, stopping to take breath, they found themselves safe

in America. As they brought neither their national language, manners, nor features with them, it is supposed they left them behind in the hurry of their flight;—I cannot give my faith to this opinion.

I pass over the supposition of the learned Grotius,—who being both an ambassador and a Dutchman to boot, is entitled to great respect,—that North America was peopled by a strolling company of Norwegians, and that Peru was founded by a colony from China,—Manco, or Mango Capac, the first Incas, being himself a Chinese. Nor shall I more than barely mention, that father Kircher ascribes the settlement of America to the Egyptians, Rudbeck to the Scandinavians, Charron to the Gauls, Juffredus Petri to a skating party from Friesland, Milius to the Celtæ, Marinocus the Sicilian to the Romans, Le Compte to the Phœnicians, Postel to the Moors, Martyn d'Angleria to the Abyssinians, together with the sage surmise of De Laet, that England, Ireland, and the Orcades may contend for that honor.

Nor will I bestow any more attention or credit to the idea that America is the fairy region of Zipangri, described by that dreaming traveller, Marco Polo, the Venetian; or that it comprises the visionary island of Atlantis, described by Plato. Neither will I stop to inves-



THE PEOPLE OF NORTH AMERICA ACCORDING TO PETRI.

tigate the heathenish assertion of Paracelsus, that each hemisphere of the globe was originally furnished with an Adam and Eve; or the more flattering opinion of Dr. Romayne, supported by many nameless authorities, that Adam was of the Indian race; or the startling conjecture of Buffon, Helvetius, and Darwin, so highly honorable to mankind, that the whole human species is accidentally descended from a remarkable family of monkeys!

This last conjecture, I must own, came upon me very suddenly and very ungraciously. I have often beheld the clown in a pantomime, while gazing in stupid wonder at the extravagant gambols of a harlequin, all at once electrified by a sudden stroke of the wooden sword across his shoulders. Little did I think, at such times, that it would ever fall to my lot to be treated with equal discourtesy, and that, while I was quietly beholding these grave philosophers, emulating the eccentric transformations of the hero of pantomime, they would on a sudden turn upon me and my readers, and with one hypothetical flourish metamorphose us into beasts! I determined from that moment not to burn my fingers with any more of their theories, but content myself with detailing the different methods by which they transported the descendants of these ancient and

respectable monkeys to this great field of theoretical warfare.

This was done either by migrations by land or transmigrations by water. Thus Padre Joseph d'Acosta enumerates three passages by land; first, by the north of Europe; secondly, by the north of Asia; and thirdly, by the regions southward of the Straits of Magellan. The learned Grotius marches his Norwegians by a pleasant route across frozen rivers and arms of the sea, through Iceland, Greenland, Estotiland, and Naremberga; and various writers, among whom are Angleria, De Hornn, and Buffon, anxious for the accommodation of these travellers, have fastened the two continents together by a strong chain of deductions,—by which means they could pass over dry-shod. But should even this fail, Pinkerton, that industrious old gentleman, who compiles books, and manufactures Geographies, has constructed a natural bridge of ice, from continent, to continent, at the distance of four or five miles from Behring's Straits,—for which he is entitled to the grateful thanks of all the wandering Aborigines who ever did or ever will pass over it.

It is an evil much to be lamented, that none of the worthy writers above quoted could ever commence his work without immediately declar-

ing hostilities against every writer who had treated of the same subject. In this particular, authors may be compared to a certain sagacious bird, which in building its nest is sure to pull to pieces the nests of all the birds in its neighborhood. This unhappy propensity tends grievously to impede the progress of sound knowledge. Theories are at best but brittle productions, and when once committed to the stream, they should take care that, like the notable pots which were fellow-voyagers, they do not crack each other.

My chief surprise is, that among the many writers I have noticed, no one has attempted to prove that this country was peopled from the moon,—or that the first inhabitants floated hither on islands of ice, as white bears cruise about the northern oceans,—or that they were conveyed hither by balloons, as modern aëronauts pass from Dover to Calais,—or by witchcraft, as Simon Magus posted among the stars, —or after the manner of the renowned Scythian Abaris, who, like the New England witches on full-blooded broomsticks, made most unheard of journeys on the back of a golden arrow, given him by the Hyperborean Apollo.

But there is still one more mode left by which this country could have been peopled, which I have reserved for the last, because I

consider it worth all the rest: it is—*by accident!* Speaking of the islands of Solomon, New Guinea, and New Holland, the profound father Charlevoix observes, "in fine, all these countries are peopled, and *it is possible* some



"AS WHITE BEARS CRUISE ABOUT THE NORTHERN OCEANS."

have been so *by accident.* Now if it could have happened in that manner, why might it not have been at the *same time*, and by the *same means* with *the other* parts of the globe?" This ingenious mode of deducing certain conclusions from possible premises is an improve-

ment in syllogistic skill, and proves the good father superior even to Archimedes, for he can turn the world without anything to rest his lever upon. It is only surpassed by the dexterity with which the sturdy old Jesuit, in another place, cuts the gordian knot :—"Nothing," says he, "is more easy. The inhabitants of both hemispheres are certainly the descendants of the same father. The common father of mankind received an express order from Heaven to people the world, and *accordingly it has been peopled*. To bring this about it was necessary to overcome all difficulties in the way, *and they have also been overcome!*" Pious logician! How does he put all the herd of laborious theorists to the blush, by explaining, in five words, what it has cost them volumes to prove they knew nothing about!

From all the authorities here quoted, and a variety of others which I have consulted, but which are omitted through fear of fatiguing the unlearned reader, I can only draw the following conclusions, which luckily, however, are sufficient for my purpose. First, that this part of the world has actually *been peopled*, (Q. E. D.) to support which we have living proofs in the numerous tribes of Indians that inhabit it. Secondly, that it has been peopled in five hundred different ways, as proved by a

cloud of authors who, from the positiveness of their assertions, seem to have been eye-witnesses to the fact. Thirdly, that the people of this country had a *variety of fathers*, which, as it may not be thought much to their credit by the common run of readers, the less we say on the subject the better. The question, therefore, I trust, is forever at rest.



Chapter V.

IN WHICH THE AUTHOR PUTS A MIGHTY QUESTION TO THE ROUT, BY THE ASSISTANCE OF THE MAN IN THE MOON,—WHICH NOT ONLY DELIVERS THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE FROM GREAT EMBARRASSMENT, BUT LIKEWISE CONCLUDES THIS INTRODUCTORY BOOK.



THE writer of a history may, in some respects, be likened unto an adventurous knight, who, having undertaken a perilous enterprise by way of establishing his fame, feels bound, in honor and chivalry, to turn back for no difficulty nor hardship, and never to shrink or quail, whatever enemy he may encounter. Under this impression, I resolutely draw my pen, and fall to, with might

and main, at those doughty questions and subtle paradoxes, which, like fiery dragons and bloody giants, beset the entrance to my history, and would fain repulse me from the very threshold. And at this moment a gigantic question has started up, which I must needs take by the beard and utterly subdue, before I can advance another step in my historic undertaking; but I trust this will be the last adversary I shall have to contend with, and that in the next book I shall be enabled to conduct my readers in triumph into the body of my work.

The question which has thus suddenly arisen is, What right had the first discoverers of America to land and take possession of a country, without first gaining the consent of its inhabitants, or yielding them an adequate compensation for their territory?—a question which has withstood many fierce assaults, and has given much distress of mind to multitudes of kind-hearted folk. And indeed, until it be totally vanquished, and put to rest, the worthy people of America can by no means enjoy the soil they inhabit, with clear right and title, and quiet, unsullied consciences.

The first source of right, by which property is acquired in a country, is DISCOVERY. For as all mankind have an equal right to anything which has never before been appropriated, so

any nation that discovers an uninhabited country, and takes possession thereof, is considered as enjoying full property, and absolute, unquestionable empire therein.*

This proposition being admitted, it follows clearly, that the Europeans who first visited America were the real discoverers of the same; nothing being necessary to the establishment of this fact, but simply to prove that it was totally uninhabited by men. This would at first appear to be a point of some difficulty, for it is well known that this quarter of the world abounded with certain animals, that walked erect on two feet, had something of a human countenance, uttering certain unintelligible sounds, very much like language; in short, had a marvellous resemblance to human beings. But the zealous and enlightened fathers, who accompanied the discoverers, for the purpose of promoting the kingdom of heaven by establishing fat monasteries and bishoprics on earth, soon cleared up this point, greatly to the satisfaction of his holiness the pope, and of all Christian voyagers and discoverers.

They plainly proved, and as no Indian writers arose on the other side, the fact was considered as fully admitted and established,

* Grotius. Puffendorff, b. v., cap. 4. Vattel, b. i., cap. 18, etc.

that the two-legged race of animals before mentioned were mere cannibals, detestable monsters, and many of them giants,—which last description of vagrants have, since the time of Gog, Magog, and Goliath, been considered as outlaws, and have received no quarter in either history, chivalry, or song. Indeed, even the philosophic Bacon declared the Americans to be people proscribed by the laws of nature, inasmuch as they had a barbarous custom of sacrificing men, and feeding upon man's flesh.

Nor are these all the proofs of their utter barbarism. Among many other writers of discernment, Ulloa tells us "their imbecility is so visible, that one can hardly form an idea of them different from what one has of the brutes. Nothing disturbs the tranquillity of their souls, equally insensible to disasters and to prosperity. Though half naked, they are as contented as a monarch in his most splendid array. Fear makes no impression on them, and respect as little." All this is furthermore supported by the authority of M. Bouguer. "It is not easy," says he, "to describe the degree of their indifference for wealth and all its advantages. One does not well know what motives to propose to them when one would persuade them to any service. It is vain to offer them money ;

they answer they are not hungry." And Vanegas confirms the whole, assuring us that "ambition they have none, and are more desirous of being thought strong than valiant. The objects of ambition with us—honor, fame, reputation, riches, posts, and distinctions—are unknown among them. So that this powerful spring of action, the cause of so much *seeming* good and *real* evil in the world, has no power over them. In a word, these unhappy mortals may be compared to children in whom the development of reason is not completed."

Now all these peculiarities, although in the most unenlightened states of Greece they would have entitled their possessors to immortal honor, as having reduced to practice those rigid and abstemious maxims, the mere talking about which acquired certain old Greeks the reputation of sages and philosophers,—yet, were they clearly proved in the present instance to betoken a most abject and brutified nature, totally beneath the human character. But the benevolent fathers, who had undertaken to turn these unhappy savages into dumb beasts, by dint of argument, advanced still stronger proofs; for, as certain divines of the sixteenth century, and among the rest Lullus, affirm,—the Americans go naked, and have no beards! "They have

nothing," says Lullus, "of the reasonable animal, except the mask." And even that mask was allowed to avail them but little, for it was soon found that they were of a hideous copper complexion: and being of a copper complex-



"IT IS VAIN TO OFFER THEM MONEY; THEY SAY THEY ARE NOT HUNGRY."

ion, it was all the same as if they were negroes: and negroes are black,—"and black," said the pious fathers, devoutly crossing themselves, "is the color of the Devil!" Therefore, so far from being able to own property, they had no right even to personal freedom; for liberty

is too radiant a deity to inhabit such gloomy temples. All which circumstances plainly convinced the righteous followers of Cortes and Pizarro, that these miscreants had no title to the soil that they infested,—that they were a perverse, illiterate, dumb, beardless, blackseed,—mere wild beasts of the forests, and like them should either be subdued or exterminated.

From the foregoing arguments, therefore, and a variety of others equally conclusive, which I forbear to enumerate, it is clearly evident that this fair quarter of the globe, when first visited by Europeans, was a howling wilderness, inhabited by nothing but wild beasts; and that the transatlantic visitors acquired an incontrovertible property therein by the *right of discovery*.

This right being fully established, we now come to the next, which is the right acquired by *cultivation*. "The cultivation of the soil," we are told, "is an obligation imposed by nature on mankind. The whole world is appointed for the nourishment of its inhabitants; but it would be incapable of doing it, was it uncultivated. Every nation is then obliged by the law of nature to cultivate the ground that has fallen to its share. Those people, like the ancient Germans and modern Tartars, who, having fertile countries, disdain to culti-

vate the earth, and choose to live by rapine, are wanting to themselves, and *deserve to be exterminated as savage and pernicious beasts.*"*

Now it is notorious that the savages knew nothing of agriculture, when first discovered by the Europeans, but lived a most vagabond, disorderly, unrighteous life,—rambling from place to place, and prodigally rioting upon the spontaneous luxuries of nature, without tasking her generosity to yield them anything more; whereas it has been most unquestionably shown, that Heaven intended the earth should be ploughed and sown, and manured, and laid out into cities, and towns, and farms, and country-seats, and pleasure-grounds, and public gardens; all which the Indians knew nothing about: therefore, they did not improve the talents Providence had bestowed on them: therefore, they were careless stewards: therefore, they had no right to the soil: therefore, they deserved to be exterminated.

It is true, the savages might plead that they drew all the benefits from the land which their simple wants required,—they found plenty of game to hunt, which, together with the roots and uncultivated fruits of the earth, furnished a sufficient variety for their frugal repasts,—and that, as Heaven merely designed the earth

* Vattel, b. i., ch. 17.

to form the abode, and satisfy the wants of man, so long as those purposes were answered, the will of Heaven was accomplished. But this only proves how undeserving they were of the blessings around them: they were so much the more savages, for not having more wants; for knowledge is in some degree an increase of desires; and it is this superiority both in the number and magnitude of his desires, that distinguishes the man from the beast. Therefore the Indians, in not having more wants, were very unreasonable animals; and it was but just that they should make way for the Europeans, who had a thousand wants to their one, and, therefore, would turn the earth to more account, and by cultivating it, more truly fulfil the will of Heaven. Besides —Grotius, and Lauterbach, and Puffendorf, and Titius, and many wise men beside, who have considered the matter properly, have determined that the property of a country cannot be acquired by hunting, cutting wood, or drawing water in it—nothing but precise demarcation of limits, and the intention of cultivation, can establish the possession. Now, as the savages (probably from never having read the authors above quoted) had never complied with any of these necessary forms, it plainly follows that they had no right to

the soil, but that it was completely at the disposal of the first comers, who had more knowledge, more wants, and more elegant, that is to say artificial, desires than themselves.

In entering upon a newly discovered, uncultivated country, therefore, the newcomers were but taking possession of what, according to the aforesaid doctrine, was their own property ;— therefore, in opposing them, the savages were invading their just rights, infringing the immutable laws of nature, and counteracting the will of heaven : therefore, they were guilty of impiety, burglary, and trespass on the case : therefore, they were hardened offenders against God and man : therefore, they ought to be exterminated.

But a more irresistible right than either that I have mentioned, and one which will be the most readily admitted by my reader, provided he be blessed with bowels of charity and philanthropy, is the right acquired by civilization. All the world knows the lamentable state in which these poor savages were found. Not only deficient in the comforts of life, but what is still worse, most piteously and unfortunately blind to the miseries of their situation. But no sooner did the benevolent inhabitants of Europe behold their sad condition, than they immediately went to work to ameliorate and improve

it. They introduced among them rum, gin, brandy, and the other comforts of life,—and it is astonishing to read how soon the poor savages learned to estimate those blessings; they likewise made known to them a thousand remedies, by which the most inveterate diseases are alleviated and healed; and that they might comprehend the benefits and enjoy the comforts of these medicines, they previously introduced among them the diseases which they were calculated to cure. By these and a variety of other methods was the condition of these poor savages wonderfully improved; they acquired a thousand wants, of which they had before been ignorant; and as he has most sources of happiness who has most wants to be gratified, they were doubtlessly rendered a much happier race of beings.

But the most important branch of civilization, and which has most strenuously been extolled by the zealous and pious fathers of the Romish Church, is the introduction of the Christian faith. It was truly a sight that might well inspire horror, to behold these savages tumbling among the dark mountains of paganism, and guilty of the most horrible ignorance of religion. It is true, they neither stole nor defrauded; they were sober, frugal, continent, and faithful to their word; but though they

acted right habitually, it was all in vain, unless they acted so from precept. The new comers, therefore, used every method to induce them to embrace and practise the true religion,—except indeed that of setting them the example.



"THEY INTRODUCED AMONG THEM RUM, GIN, AND BRANDY."

But notwithstanding all these complicated labors for their good, such was the unparalleled obstinacy of these stubborn wretches, that they ungratefully refused to acknowledge the strangers as their benefactors, and persisted in disbelieving the doctrines they endeavored to incul-

cate ; most insolently alleging, that, from their conduct, the advocates of Christianity did not seem to believe in it themselves. Was not this too much for human patience?—would not one suppose that the benign visitants from Europe, provoked at their incredulity, and discouraged by their stiff-necked obstinacy, would forever have abandoned their shores, and consigned them to their original ignorance and misery? But no : so zealous were they to effect the temporal comfort and eternal salvation of these pagan infidels, that they even proceeded from the milder means of persuasion to the more painful and troublesome one of persecution,—let loose among them whole troops of fiery monks and furious bloodhounds, — purified them by fire and sword, by stake and fagot ; in consequence of which indefatigable measures the cause of Christain love and charity was so rapidly advanced, that in a few years not one fifth of the unbelievers existed in South America that were found there at the time of its discovery.

What stronger right need the European settlers advance to the country than this? Have not whole nations of uninformed savages been made acquainted with a thousand imperious wants and indispensable comforts, of which they were before wholly ignorant? Have

they not been literally hunted and smoked out of the dens and lurking-places of ignorance and infidelity, and absolutely scourged into the right path? Have not the temporal things, the vain baubles and filthy lucre of this world, which were apt to engage their worldly and selfish thoughts, been benevolently taken from them; and have they not, instead thereof, been taught to set their affections on things above? And, finally, to use the words of a reverend Spanish father, in a letter to his superior in Spain, "Can any one have the presumption to say that these savage Pagans have yielded anything more than an inconsiderable recompense to their benefactors, in surrendering to them a little pitiful tract of this dirty sublunary planet in exchange for a glorious inheritance in the kingdom of heaven?"

Here, then, are three complete and undeniable sources of right established, any one of which was more than ample to establish a property in the newly-discovered regions of America. Now, so it has happened in certain parts of this delightful quarter of the globe, that the right of discovery has been so strenuously asserted, the influence of cultivation so industriously extended, and the progress of salvation and civilization so zealously prosecuted, that, what with their attendant wars, per-

secutions, oppressions, diseases, and other partial evils that often hang on the skirts of great benefits, the savage aborigines have, somehow or another, been utterly annihilated;—and this all at once brings me to a fourth right, which is worth all the others put together. For the original claimants to the soil being all dead and buried, and no one remaining to inherit or dispute the soil, the Spaniards, as the next immediate occupants, entered upon the possession as clearly as the hangman succeeds to the clothes of the malefactor; and as they have Blackstone,* and all the learned expounders of the law on their side, they may set all actions of ejectment at defiance;—and this last right may be entitled the RIGHT BY EXTERMINATION, or, in other words, the RIGHT BY GUN-POWDER.

But lest any scruples of conscience should remain on this head, and to settle the question of right forever, his holiness Pope Alexander VI. issued a bull, by which he generously granted the newly-discovered quarter of the globe to the Spaniards and Portuguese; who, thus having law and gospel on their side, and being inflamed with great spiritual zeal, showed the Pagan savages neither favor nor affection, but prosecuted the work of discovery, coloniza-

*Blackstone, *Com.*, b. ii., cap. 1.

tion, civilization, and extermination with ten times more fury than ever.

Thus were the European worthies who first discovered America clearly entitled to the soil ;



THE SPANISH HAD THE RIGHT BY GUN-POWDER.

and not only entitled to the soil, but likewise to the eternal thanks of these infidel savages, for having come so far, endured so many perils by sea and land, and taken such unwearied

pains, for no other purpose but to improve their forlorn, uncivilized and heathenish condition,—for having made them acquainted with the comforts of life,—for having introduced among them the light of religion,—and, finally, for having hurried them out of the world, to enjoy its reward!

But as argument is never so well understood by us selfish mortals as when it comes home to ourselves, and as I am particularly anxious that this question should be put to rest forever, I will suppose a parallel case, by way of arousing the candid attention of my readers.

Let us suppose, then, that the inhabitants of the moon, by astonishing advancement in science, and by profound insight into that lunar philosophy, the mere flickerings of which have of late years dazzled the feeble optics, and addled the shallow brains of the good people of our globe,—let us suppose, I say, that the inhabitants of the moon, by these means, had arrived at such a command of their *energies*, such an enviable state of *perfectibility*, as to control the elements, and navigate the boundless regions of space. Let us suppose a roving crew of these soaring philosophers, in the course of an aërial voyage of discovery among the stars, should chance to alight upon this outlandish planet.

And here I beg my readers will not have the uncharitableness to smile, as is too frequently the fault of volatile readers, when perusing the grave speculations of philosophers. I am far from indulging in any sportive vein at present ;



THE HEADLESS MEN OF THE MOON VISIT US.

nor is the supposition I have been making so wild as many may deem it. It has long been a very serious and anxious question with me, and many a time and oft, in the course of my overwhelming cares and contrivances for the

welfare and protection of this my native planet, have I lain awake whole nights debating in my mind, whether it were most probable we should first discover and civilize the moon, or the moon discover and civilize our globe. Neither would the prodigy of sailing in the air and cruising among the stars be a whit more astonishing and incomprehensible to us than was the European mystery of navigating floating castles, through the world of waters, to the simple natives. We have already discovered the art of coasting along the aërial shores of our planet, by means of balloons, as the savages had of venturing along their sea-coasts in canoes; and the disparity between the former and the aërial vehicles of the philosophers from the moon might not be greater than that between the bark canoes of the savages and the mighty ships of their discoverers. I might here pursue an endless chain of similar speculations; but as they would be unimportant to my subject, I abandon them to my reader, particularly if he be a philosopher, as matters well worthy of his attentive consideration.

To return, then, to my supposition;—let us suppose that the aërial visitants I have mentioned possessed of vastly superior knowledge to ourselves; that is to say, possessed of superior knowledge in the art of extermination,—riding

on hyppogriffs,—defended with impenetrable armor,—armed with concentrated sunbeams, and provided with vast engines, to hurl enormous moon-stones: in short, let us suppose them, if our vanity will permit the supposition, as superior to us in knowledge, and consequently in power, as the Europeans were to the Indians, when they first discovered them. All this is very possible; it is only our self-sufficiency that makes us think otherwise; and I warrant the poor savages, before they had any knowledge of the white men, armed in all the terrors of glittering steel and tremendous gun-powder, were as perfectly convinced that they themselves were the wisest, the most virtuous, powerful, and perfect of created beings, as are, at this present moment, the lordly inhabitants of old England, the volatile populace of France, or even the self-satisfied citizens of this most enlightened republic.

Let us suppose, moreover, that the aërial voyagers, finding this planet to be nothing but a howling wilderness, inhabited by us poor savages and wild beasts, shall take formal possession of it, in the name of his most gracious and philosophic excellency, the man in the moon. Finding, however, that their numbers are incompetent to hold it in complete subjection, on account of the ferocious barbarity of

its inhabitants, they shall take our worthy President, the King of England, the Emperor of Hayti, the mighty Bonaparte, and the great King of Bantam, and returning to their native planet, shall carry them to court, as were the Indian chiefs led about as spectacles in the courts of Europe.

Then making such obeisance as the etiquette of the court requires, they shall address the puissant man in the moon, in, as near as I can conjecture, the following terms :—

"Most serene and mighty Potentate, whose dominions extend as far as eye can reach, who rideth on the Great Bear, useth the sun as a looking-glass, and maintaineth unrivalled control over tides, madmen, and sea-crabs. We, thy liege subjects, have just returned from a voyage of discovery, in the course of which we have landed and taken possession of that obscure little dirty planet, which thou beholdest rolling at a distance. The five uncouth monsters, which we have brought into this august presence, were once very important chiefs among their fellow-savages, who are a race of beings totally destitute of the common attributes of humanity ; and differing in everything from the inhabitants of the moon, inasmuch as they carry their heads upon their shoulders, instead of under their arms,—have two eyes

instead of one,—are utterly destitute of tails, and of a variety of unseemly complexions, particularly of horrible whiteness, instead of pea-green.



"WHO RIDETH ON THE GREAT BEAR AND USETH THE SUN AS A LOOKING-GLASS."

"We have moreover found these miserable savages sunk into a state of the utmost ignorance and depravity, every man shamelessly

living with his own wife, and rearing his own children, instead of indulging in that community of wives enjoined by the law of nature, as expounded by the philosophers of the moon. In a word, they have scarcely a gleam of true philosophy among them, but are, in fact, utter heretics, ignoramuses, and barbarians. Taking compassion, therefore, on the sad condition of these sublunary wretches, we have endeavored, while we remained on their planet, to introduce among them the light of reason, and the comforts of the moon. We have treated them to mouthfuls of moonshine, and draughts of nitrous oxide, which they swallowed with incredible voracity, particularly the females; and we have likewise endeavored to instil into them the precepts of lunar philosophy. We have insisted upon their renouncing the contemptible shackles of religion and common sense, and adoring the profound, omnipotent, and all-perfect energy, and the ecstatic, immutable, immovable perfection. But such was the unparalleled obstinacy of these wretched savages, that they persisted in cleaving to their wives, and adhering to their religion, and absolutely set at naught the sublime doctrines of the moon,—nay, among other abominable heresies, they even went so far as blasphemously to declare, that this ineffable planet was

made of nothing more nor less than green cheese!''

At these words, the great man in the moon (being a very profound philosopher) shall fall into a terrible passion, and possessing equal authority over things that do not belong to him, as did whilom his holiness the Pope, shall forthwith issue a formidable bull, specifying, ''That, whereas a certain crew of Lunatics have lately discovered, and taken possession of a newly-discovered planet called *the earth;* and that, whereas it is inhabited by none but a race of two-legged animals that carry their heads on their shoulders instead of under their arms, cannot talk the Lunatic language, have two eyes instead of one, are destitute of tails, and of a horrible whiteness, instead of pea-green:—therefore, and for a variety of other excellent reasons, they are considered incapable of possessing any property in the planet they infest, and the right and title to it are confirmed to its original discoverers. And furthermore, the colonists who are now about to depart to the aforesaid planet are authorized and commanded to use every means to convert these infidel savages from the darkness of Christianity, and make them thorough and absolute Lunatics.''

In consequence of this benevolent bull, our

philosophic benefactors go to work with hearty zeal. They seize upon our fertile territories, scourge us from our rightful possessions, relieve us from our wives ; and when we are unreasonable enough to complain, they will turn upon us and say : Miserable barbarians ! ungrateful wretches ! have we not come thousands of miles to improve your worthless planet ; have we not fed you with moonshine ; have we not intoxicated you with nitrous oxide ; does not our moon give you light every night ; and have you the baseness to murmur when we claim a pitiful return for all these benefits ? But finding that we not only persist in absolute contempt of their reasoning and disbelief in their philosophy, but even go so far as daringly to defend our property, their patience shall be exhausted, and they shall resort to their superior powers of argument : hunt us with hyppogriffs, transfix us with concentrated sunbeams, demolish our cities with moon-stones ; until having, by main force, converted us to the true faith, they shall graciously permit us to exist in the torrid deserts of Arabia, or the frozen regions of Lapland, there to enjoy the blessings of civilization and the charms of lunar philosophy, in much the same manner as the reformed and enlightened savages of this country are kindly suffered to inhabit the inhos-

pitable forests of the north, or the impenetrable wildernesses of South America.

Thus, I hope, I have clearly proved, and strikingly illustrated, the right of the early colonists to the possession of this country; and thus is this gigantic question completely vanquished: so, having manfully surmounted all obstacles, and subdued all opposition, what remains but that I should forthwith conduct my readers into the city which we have been so long in a manner besieging? But hold; before I proceed another step, I must pause to take breath, and recover from the excessive fatigue I have undergone, in preparing to begin this most accurate of histories. And in this I do but imitate the example of a renowned Dutch tumbler of antiquity, who took a start of three miles for the purpose of jumping over a hill, but having run himself out of breath by the time he reached the foot, sat himself quietly down for a few moments to blow, and then walked over it at his leisure.





Book III.

TREATING OF THE FIRST SETTLEMENT OF THE PROVINCE OF NIEUW-NEDERLANDTS.



Chapter II.

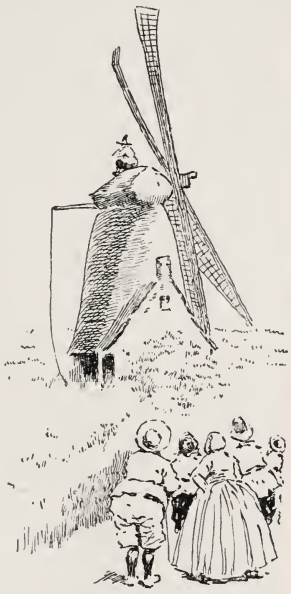
IN WHICH ARE CONTAINED DIVERS REASONS WHY A MAN SHOULD NOT WRITE IN A HURRY; ALSO, OF MASTER HENDRICK HUDSON, HIS DISCOVERY OF A STRANGE COUNTRY,—AND HOW HE WAS MAGNIFICENTLY REWARDED BY THE MUNIFICENCE OF THEIR HIGH MIGHTINESSES.



MY great-grandfather, by the mother's side, Hermanus Van Clattercop, when employed to build the large stone church at Rotterdam, which stands about three hundred yards to your left after you turn off from the Boomkeys, and which is so conveniently constructed, that all the zealous Christians of Rotterdam prefer sleeping through a sermon there to any other church in the city,—my great-grandfather, I say, when employed to build that famous church, did in the first place send to Delft for a box of long pipes; then

having purchased a new spitting-box and a hundred-weight of the best Virginia, he sat himself down, and did nothing for the space of three months but smoke most laboriously. Then did he spend full three months more in trudging on foot, and voyaging in trekschuit, from Rotterdam to Amsterdam—to Delft—to Haerlem—to Leyden—to the Hague, knocking his head and breaking his pipe against every church in his road. Then did he advance gradually nearer and nearer to Rotterdam, until he came in full sight of the identical spot whereon the church was to be built. Then did he spend three months longer in walking round it and round it, contemplating it, first from one point of view, and then from another,—now would he be paddled by it on the canal,—now would he peep at it through a telescope from the other side of the Meuse, and now would he take a bird's-eye glance at it from the top of one of those gigantic windmills which protect the gates of the city. The good folks of the place were on the tiptoe of expectation and impatience;—notwithstanding all the turmoil of my great-grandfather, not a symptom of the church was yet to be seen; they even began to fear it would never be brought into the world, but that its great projector would lie down and die in labor of the

mighty plan he had conceived. At length, having occupied twelve good months in puffing and paddling, and talking and walking, —having travelled over all Holland, and even taken a peep into France and Germany,— having smoked five hundred and ninety-nine pipes, and three hundred-weight of the best Virginia tobacco,— my great-grandfather gathered together all that knowing and industrious class of citizens who prefer attending to anybody's business sooner than their own, and having pulled off his coat and five pair of breeches, he advanced sturdily up and laid the corner-stone of the church, in presence of the whole multitude—just at the commencement of the thirteenth month.



MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER TAKES A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW FROM THE TOP OF A WINDMILL.

In a similar manner, and with the example of my worthy ancestor full before my eyes, have I proceeded in writing this most authentic history. The honest Rotterdamers no doubt thought my great-grandfather was doing nothing at all to the purpose, while he was making such a world of prefatory bustle about the building of his church—and many of the ingenious inhabitants of this fair city will unquestionably suppose that all the preliminary chapters, with the discovery, population, and final settlement of America, were totally irrelevant and superfluous,—and that the main business, the history of New York, is not a jot more advanced than if I had never taken up my pen. Never were wise people more mistaken in their conjectures: in consequence of going to work slowly and deliberately, the church came out of my grandfather's hands one of the most sumptuous, goodly, and glorious edifices in the known world,—excepting that, like our magnificent Capitol at Washington, it was begun on so grand a scale that the good folks could not afford to finish more than the wing of it. So, likewise, I trust, if ever I am able to finish this work on the plan I have commenced (of which, in simple truth, I sometimes have my doubts) it will be found that I have pursued the latest rules of my art, as

exemplified in the writings of all the great American historians, and wrought a very large history out of a small subject,—which, nowadays, is considered one of the great triumphs of historic skill. To proceed, then, with the thread of my story.

In the ever-memorable year of our Lord 1609, on a Saturday morning, the five-and-twentieth day of March, old style, did that "worthy and irrecoverable discoverer (as he has justly been called), Master Henry Hudson," set sail from Holland in a stout vessel called the *Half-Moon*, being employed by the Dutch East India Company, to seek a north-west passage to China.

Henry (or, as the Dutch historians call him, Hendrick) Hudson was a seafaring man of renown, who had learned to smoke tobacco under Sir Walter Raleigh, and is said to have been the first to introduce it into Holland, which gained him much popularity in that country, and caused him to find great favor in the eyes of their High Mightinesses, the Lords States-General, and also of the honorable West India Company. He was a short, square, brawny old gentleman, with a double chin, a mastiff mouth, and a broad copper nose, which was supposed in those days to have acquired its fiery hue from the constant neighborhood of his tobacco-pipe.

He wore a true Andrea Ferrara, tucked in a leathern belt, and a commodore's cocked hat on one side of his head. He was remarkable for always jerking up his breeches when he gave out his orders, and his voice sounded not unlike the prattling of a tin trumpet,—owing to the number of hard northwesters which he had swallowed in the course of his seafaring.

Such was Hendrick Hudson, of whom we have heard so much, and know so little; and I have been thus particular in his description for the benefit of modern painters and statuaries, that they may represent him as he was,—and not, according to their common custom with modern heroes, make him look like Cæsar, or Marcus Aurelius, or the Apollo of Belvidere.

As chief mate and favorite companion, the commodore chose master Robert Juet, of Limehouse, in England. By some his name has been spelled *Chewit*, and ascribed to the circumstances of his having been the first man that ever chewed tobacco; but this I believe to be a mere flippancy; more especially as certain of his progeny are living at this day, who write their names Juet. He was an old comrade and early schoolmate of the great Hudson, with whom he had often played truant and sailed chip



HENDRICK HUDSON.

boats in a neighboring pond, when they were little boys: from whence it is said that the commodore first derived his bias towards a seafaring life. Certain it is that the old people about Limehouse declared Robert Juet to be an unlucky urchin, prone to mischief, that would one day or other come to the gallows.

He grew up, as boys of that kind often grow up, a rambling, heedless varlet, tossed about in all quarters of the world,—meeting with more perils and wonders than did Sinbad the Sailor, without growing a whit more wise, prudent, or ill-natured. Under every misfortune, he comforted himself with a quid of tobacco, and the truly philosophic maxim, that "it will be all the same thing a hundred years hence." He was skilled in the art of carving anchors and true lover's knots on the bulkheads and quarter-railings, and was considered a great wit on board ship, in consequence of his playing pranks on everybody around, and now and then even making a wry face at old Hendrick, when his back was turned.

To this universal genius are we indebted for many particulars concerning this voyage; of which he wrote a history, at the request of the commodore, who had an unconquerable aversion to writing himself, from having received so many floggings about it when at school.

To supply the deficiencies of Master Juet's journal, which is written with true log-book brevity, I have availed myself of divers family traditions, handed down from my great-great-grandfather, who accompanied the expedition in the capacity of cabin-boy.

From all that I can learn, few incidents worthy of remark happened on the voyage; and it mortifies me exceedingly that I have to admit so noted an expedition into my work, without making any more of it.

Suffice it to say, the voyage was prosperous and tranquil; the crew, being a patient people, much given to slumber and vacuity, and but little troubled with the disease of thinking,—a malady of the mind, which is the sure breeder of discontent. Hudson had laid in abundance of gin and sourkrout, and every man was allowed to sleep quietly at his post unless the wind blew. True it is, some slight disaffection was shown on two or three occasions, at certain unreasonable conduct of Commodore Hudson. Thus, for instance, he forbore to shorten sail when the wind was light, and the weather serene, which was considered among the most experienced Dutch seamen as certain *weather-breeders*, or prognostics that the weather would change for the worse. He acted, moreover, in direct contradiction to that ancient and sage

rule of the Dutch navigators, who always took in sail at night, put the helm a-port, and turned in,—by which precaution they had a good night's rest, were sure of knowing where they were the next morning, and stood but little chance of running down a continent in the dark. He likewise prohibited the seamen from wearing more than five jackets and six pair of breeches, under pretence of rendering them more alert; and no man was permitted to go aloft and hand in sails with a pipe in his mouth, as is the invariable Dutch custom at the present day. All these grievances, though they might ruffle for a moment the constitutional tranquillity of the honest Dutch tars, made but transient impression;—they ate hugely, drank profusely, and slept immeasurably; and being under the especial guidance of Providence, the ship was safely conducted to the coast of America; where, after sundry unimportant touchings and standings off and on, she at length, on the fourth day of September, entered that majestic bay which at this day expands its ample bosom before the city of New York, and which had never before been visited by any European.*

* True it is—and I am not ignorant of the fact—that in a certain apocryphal book of voyages, compiled by one Hakluyt, is to be found a letter written to

It has been traditionary in our family, that when the great navigator was first blessed with a view of this enchanting island, he was observed, for the first and only time in his life, to exhibit strong symptoms of astonishment



"EVERY MAN WAS ALLOWED TO SLEEP AT HIS POST UNLESS THE WIND BLEW."

and admiration. He is said to have turned to Master Juet, and uttered these remarkable words, while he pointed towards this para-

Francis the First, by one Giovanne, or John Verazzani, on which some writers are inclined to found a belief that this delightful bay had been visited nearly a

dise of the new world,—"See! there!"—and thereupon, as was always his way when he was uncommonly pleased, he did puff out such clouds of dense tobacco-smoke, that in one minute the vessel was out of sight of land, and Master Juet was fain to wait until the winds dispersed this impenetrable fog.

It was indeed,—as my great-grandfather used to say,—though in truth I never heard him, for he died, as might be expected, before I was born,—"It was indeed a spot on which the eye might have revelled forever, in ever new and never-ending beauties." The island of Mannhata spread wide before them, like

century previous to the voyage of the enterprising Hudson. Now this (albeit it has met with the countenance of certain very judicious and learned men) I hold in utter disbelief, and that for various good and substantial reasons: *First*, Because on strict examination it will be found, that the description given by this Verazzani applies about as well to the bay of New York as it does to my nightcap. *Secondly*, Because that this John Verazzani, for whom I already begin to feel a most bitter enmity, is a native of Florence; and everybody knows the crafty wiles of these losel Florentines, by which they filched away the laurels from the brows of the immortal Colon, (vulgarly called Columbus,) and bestowed them on their officious townsman, Amerigo Vespucci; and I make no doubt they are equally ready to rob the illustrious Hudson

some sweet vision of fancy, or some fair creation of industrious magic. Its hills of smiling green swelled gently one above another, crowned with lofty trees of luxuriant growth; some pointing their tapering foliage towards the clouds, which were gloriously transparent; and others loaded with a verdant burden of clambering vines, bowing their branches to the earth, that was covered with flowers. On the gentle declivities of the hills were scattered in gay profusion, the dog-wood, the sumach, and the wild brier, whose scarlet berries and white blossoms glowed brightly among the deep green of the surrounding foliage; and here and there a curling column of smoke,

of the credit of discovering this beautiful island, adorned by the city of New York, and placing it beside their usurped discovery of South America. And, *thirdly*, I award my decision in favor of the pretensions of Hendrick Hudson, inasmuch as his expedition sailed from Holland, being truly and absolutely a Dutch enterprise;—and though all the proofs in the world were introduced on the other side, I would set them at naught, as undeserving my attention. If these three reasons be not sufficient to satisfy every burgher of this ancient city, all I can say is, they are degenerate descendants from their venerable Dutch ancestors, and totally unworthy the trouble of convincing. Thus, therefore, the title of Hendrick Hudson to his renowned discovery is fully vindicated.

rising from the little glens that opened along the shore, seemed to promise the weary voyagers a welcome at the hands of their fellow-creatures. As they stood gazing with entranced attention on the scene before them, a redman crowned with feathers issued from one of these glens, and after contemplating in wonder the gallant ship, as she sat like a stately swan swimming on a silver lake, sounded the war-whoop, and bounded into the woods like a wild deer, to the utter astonishment of the phlegmatic Dutchmen, who had never heard such a noise, or witnessed such a caper in their whole lives.

Of the transactions of our adventurers with the savages, and how the latter smoked copper pipes, and ate dried currants; how they brought great store of tobacco and oysters; how they shot one of the ship's crew, and how he was buried, I shall say nothing; being that I consider them unimportant to my history. After tarrying a few days in the bay, in order to refresh themselves after their seafaring, our voyagers weighed anchor, to explore a mighty river which emptied into the bay. This river, it is said, was known among the savages by the name of the *Shatemuck*; though we are assured in an excellent little history published in 1674, by John Josselyn, Gent.,

that it was called the *Mohegan*,* and Master Richard Blome, who wrote some time afterwards, asserts the same,—so that I very much incline in favor of the opinion of these two honest gentlemen. Be this as it may, up this river did the adventurous Hendrick proceed, little doubting but it would turn out to be the much looked-for passage to China!



"A RED MAN CROWNED WITH FEATHERS ISSUED FROM ONE OF THESE GLENS."

The journal goes on to make mention of divers interviews between the crew and the natives, in the voyage up the river; but as they would be impertinent to my history, I

*This river is likewise laid down in Ogilvy's map as Manhattan—Noordt Montaigne and Mauritius River.

shall pass over them in silence, except the following dry joke, played off by the old commodore and his school-fellow, Robert Juet, which does such vast credit to their experimental philosophy, that I cannot refrain from inserting it. "Our master and his mate determined to try some of the chiefe men of the countrey, whether they had any treacherie in them. So they tooke them downe into the cabin, and gave them so much wine and aqua vitæ, that they were all merrie; and one of them had his wife with him, which sate so modestly, as any of our countrey women would do in a strange place. In the end, one of them was drunke, which had been aborde of our ship all the time that we had been there, and that was strange to them, for they could not tell how to take it." *

Having satisfied himself by this ingenious experiment that the natives were an honest, social race of jolly roysters, who had no objection to a drinking-bout and were very merry in their cups, the old commodore chuckled hugely to himself, and thrusting a double quid of tobacco in his cheek, directed Master Juet to have it carefully recorded, for the satisfaction of all the natural philosophers of the university of Leyden,—which done, he proceeded on his

* *Juet's Journ.*, Purch. Pil.

voyage, with great self-complacency. After sailing, however, above a hundred miles up the river, he found the watery world around him began to grow more shallow and confined, the current more rapid, and perfectly fresh,—phenomena not uncommon in the ascent of rivers, but which puzzled the honest Dutchmen prodigiously. A consultation was therefore called, and having deliberated full six hours, they were brought to a determination by the ship's running aground,—whereupon they unanimously concluded that there was but little chance of getting to China in this direction. A boat, however, was despatched to explore higher up the river, which, on its return, confirmed the opinion; upon this the ship was warped off and put about, with great difficulty, being, like most of her sex, exceedingly hard to govern; and the adventurous Hudson, according to the account of my great-great-grandfather, returned down the river—with a prodigious flea in his ear!

Being satisfied that there was little likelihood of getting to China, unless, like the blind man, he returned from whence he set out, and took a fresh start, he forthwith recrossed the sea to Holland, where he was received with great welcome by the honorable East India Company, who were very much rejoiced to see him

come back safe—with their ship; and at a large and respectable meeting of the first merchants and burgomasters of Amsterdam, it was unanimously determined, that, as a munificent reward for the important discovery he had made, the great river Mohegan should be called after his name!—and it continues to be called Hudson river unto this very day.



Chapter III.

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF A MIGHTY ARK WHICH FLOATED, UNDER THE PROTECTION OF ST. NICHOLAS, FROM HOLLAND TO GIBBET ISLAND,—THE DESCENT OF THE STRANGE ANIMALS THEREFROM,—A GREAT VICTORY, AND A DESCRIPTION OF THE ANCIENT VILLAGE OF COMMUNIPAW.



THE delectable accounts given by the great Hudson, and Master Juet, of the country they had discovered, excited not a little talk and speculation among the good people of Holland. Letters-patent were granted by government to an association of merchants, called the West India Company, for the exclusive trade on Hudson river, on which they erected a trading-house, called Fort Aurania, or Orange, from

whence did spring the great city of Albany. But I forbear to dwell on the various commercial and colonizing enterprises which took place,—among which was that of Mynheer Adrian Block, who discovered and gave a name to Block Island, since famous for its cheese,—and shall barely confine myself to that which gave birth to this renowned city.

It was some three or four years after the return of the immortal Hendrick, that a crew of honest, Low-Dutch colonists set sail from the city of Amsterdam for the shores of America. It is an irreparable loss to history, and a great proof of the darkness of the age, and the lamentable neglect of the noble art of book-making, since so industriously cultivated by knowing sea-captains, and learned supercargoes, that an expedition so interesting and important in its results should be passed over in utter silence. To my great-great-grandfather am I again indebted for the few facts I am enabled to give concerning it,—he having once more embarked for this country with a full determination, as he said, of ending his days here, and of begetting a race of Knickerbockers that should rise to be great men in the land.

The ship in which these illustrious adventurers set sail was called the *Goede Vrouw*, or good woman, in compliment to the wife of the

President of the West India Company, who was allowed by everybody (except her husband) to be a sweet-tempered lady—when not in liquor. It was in truth a most gallant vessel, of the most improved Dutch construction, and made by the ablest ship-carpenters of Amsterdam, who it is well known, always model their ships after the fair forms of their country-women. Accordingly it had one hundred feet in the beam, one hundred feet in the keel, and one hundred feet from the bottom of the stern-post to the tafferel. Like the beauteous model, who was declared to be the greatest belle in Amsterdam, it was full in the bows, with a pair of enormous cat-heads, a copper bottom, and withal a most prodigious poop.

The architect, who was somewhat of a religious man, far from decorating the ship with pagan idols, such as Jupiter, Neptune, or Hercules (which heathenish abominations, I have no doubt, occasion the misfortunes and shipwreck of many a noble vessel)—he, I say on the contrary, did laudably erect for a head, a goodly image of St. Nicholas, equipped with a low, broad-brimmed hat, a huge pair of Flemish trunk-hose, and a pipe that reached to the end of the bowsprit. Thus gallantly furnished, the stanch ship floated sideways, like a majestic

goose, out of the harbor of the great city of Amsterdam, and all the bells, that were not otherwise engaged, rang a triple bob-major on the joyful occasion.

My great-great-grandfather remarks, that the voyage was uncommonly prosperous, for, being under the especial care of the ever-revered St. Nicholas, the *Goede Vrouw* seemed to be endowed with qualities unknown to common vessels. Thus she made as much leeway as headway, could get along very nearly as fast with the wind ahead as when it was a-poop,—and was particularly great in a calm; in consequence of which singular advantages she made out to accomplish her voyage in a very few months, and came to anchor at the mouth of the Hudson, a little to the east of Gibbet Island.

Here, lifting up their eyes, they beheld, on what is at present called the Jersey shore, a small Indian village, pleasantly embowered in a grove of spreading elms, and the natives all collected on the beach, gazing in stupid admiration at the *Goede Vrouw*. A boat was immediately despatched to enter into a treaty with them, and approaching the shore, hailed them through a trumpet, in the most friendly terms; but so horribly confounded were these poor savages at the tremendous and uncouth

sound of the Low-Dutch language, that they one and all took to their heels, and scampered over the Bergen hills; nor did they stop until they had buried themselves, head and ears, in the marshes on the other side, where they all miserably perished to a man;—and their bones, being collected and decently covered by the Tammany Society of that day, formed that



"THEY ONE AND ALL TOOK TO THEIR HEELS, AND SCAMPERED OVER THE BERGEN HILLS."

singular mound called RATTLESNAKE HILL, which rises out of the centre of the salt marshes a little to the east of the Newark Causeway.

Animated by this unlooked-for victory, our valiant heroes sprang ashore in triumph, took possession of the soil as conquerors, in the name of their High Mightinesses the Lords States-General; and, marching fearlessly forward, carried the village of COMMUNIPAW by

storm, notwithstanding that it was vigorously defended by some half a score of old squaws and pappooses. On looking about them they were so transported with the excellences of the place, that they had very little doubt the blessed St. Nicholas had guided them thither, as the very spot whereon to settle their colony. The softness of the soil was wonderfully adapted to the driving of piles; the swamps and marshes around them afforded ample opportunities for the constructing of dykes and dams; the shallowness of the shore was peculiarly favorable to the building of docks;—in a word, this spot abounded with all the requisites for the foundation of a great Dutch city. On making a faithful report, therefore, to the crew of the *Goede Vrouw*, they one and all determined that this was the destined end of their voyage. Accordingly they descended from the *Goede Vrouw*, men, women, and children, in goodly groups, as did the animals of yore from the ark, and formed themselves into a thriving settlement, which they called by the Indian name COMMUNIPAW.

As all the world is doubtless perfectly acquainted with Communipaw, it may seem somewhat superfluous to treat of it in the present work; but my readers will please to recollect, notwithstanding it is my chief desire

to satisfy the present age, yet I write likewise for posterity, and have to consult the understanding and curiosity of some half a score of centuries yet to come, by which time, perhaps, were it not for this invaluable history, the great Communipaw, like Babylon, Carthage, Nineveh, and other great cities, might be perfectly extinct,—sunk and forgotten in its own mud,—its inhabitants turned into oysters,* and even its situation a fertile subject of learned controversy and hard-headed investigation among indefatigable historians. Let me then piously rescue from oblivion the humble relics of a place, which was the egg from whence was hatched the mighty city of New York!

Communipaw is at present but a small village, pleasantly situated, among rural scenery, on that beauteous part of the Jersey shore which was known in ancient legends by the name of Pavonia,† and commands a grand prospect of the superb bay of New York. It is within but half an hour's sail of the latter place, provided you have a fair wind, and may be distinctly seen from the city. Nay, it is a well-known fact, which I can testify from my

* "Men by inaction degenerate into oysters."—Kaimes.

† Pavonia, in the ancient maps, is a tract of country extending from about Hoboken to Amboy.

own experience, that on a clear, still summer evening, you may hear, from the Battery of New York, the obstreperous peals of broad-mouthed laughter of the Dutch negroes at Communipaw, who, like most other negroes, are famous for their risible powers. This is peculiarly the case on Sunday evenings, when, it is remarked by an ingenious and observant philosopher, who has made great discoveries in the neighborhood of this city, that they always laugh loudest, which he attributes to the circumstance of their having their holiday clothes on.

These negroes, in fact, like the monks of the dark ages, engross all the knowledge of the place, and being infinitely more adventurous and more knowing than their masters, carry on all the foreign trade; making frequent voyages to town in canoes loaded with oysters, buttermilk, and cabbages. They are great astrologers, predicting the different changes of weather almost as accurately as an almanac; they are moreover exquisite performers on three-stringed fiddles; in whistling they almost boast the far-famed powers of Orpheus' lyre, for not a horse or an ox in the place, when at the plough or before the wagon, will budge a foot until he hears the well-known whistle of his black driver and companion.—And from

their amazing skill at casting up accounts upon their fingers, they are regarded with as much veneration as were the disciples of Pythagoras of yore, when initiated into the sacred quaternary of numbers.



THE BROAD-MOUTHED LAUGHTER OF THE DUTCH NEGROES.

As to the honest burghers of Communipaw, like wise men and sound philosophers, they never look beyond their pipes, nor trouble their heads about any affairs out of their immediate neighborhood; so that they live in profound and enviable ignorance of all the troubles, anxieties, and revolutions of this distracted planet.

I am even told that many among them do verily believe that Holland, of which they have heard so much from tradition, is situated somewhere on Long Island,—that *Spiking-devil* and the *Narrows* are the two ends of the world,—that the country is still under the dominion of their High Mightinesses,—and that the city of New York still goes by the name of Nieuw Amsterdam. They meet every Saturday afternoon at the only tavern in the place, which bears as a sign a square-headed likeness of the Prince of Orange, where they smoke a silent pipe, by way of promoting social conviviality, and invariably drink a mug of cider to the success of Admiral Van Tromp, who they imagine is still sweeping the British channel, with a broom at his mast-head.

Communipaw, in short, is one of the numerous little villages in the vicinity of this most beautiful of cities, which are so many strongholds and fastnesses, whither the primitive manners of our Dutch forefathers have retreated, and where they are cherished with devout and scrupulous strictness. The dress of the original settlers is handed down inviolate, from father to son: the identical broad-brimmed hat, broad-skirted coat, and broad-bottomed breeches, continue from generation to generation; and several gigantic knee-buckles of

massy silver are still in wear, that made gallant display in the days of the patriarchs of Communipaw. The language likewise continues unadulterated by barbarous innovations; and so critically correct is the village schoolmaster in his dialect, that his reading of a Low-Dutch psalm has much the same effect on the nerves as the filing of a handsaw.



Chapter III.

IN WHICH IS SET FORTH THE TRUE ART OF MAKING A BARGAIN—TOGETHER WITH THE MIRACULOUS ESCAPE OF A GREAT METROPOLIS IN A FOG—AND THE BIOGRAPHY OF CERTAIN HEROES OF COMMUNIPAW.



HAVING, in the trifling digression which concluded the last chapter, discharged the filial duty which the city of New York owed to Communipaw, as being the mother settlement, and having given a faithful picture of it as it stands at present, I return with a soothing sentiment of self-approbation, to dwell upon its early history. The crew of the *Goede Vrouw* being soon reinforced by fresh importations from Holland, the settlement went jollily on, increasing in magnitude and prosperity. The neighboring Indians in a short time became accustomed to the uncouth sound

of the Dutch language, and an intercourse gradually took place between them and the newcomers. The Indians were much given to long talks, and the Dutch to long silence;—in this particular, therefore, they accommodated each other completely. The chiefs would make long speeches about the big bull, the Wabash, and the Great Spirit, to which the others would listen very attentively, smoke their pipes, and grunt *yah, mynher*, — whereat the poor savages were wondrously delighted. They instructed the new settlers in the best art of curing and smoking tobacco, while the latter, in return, made them drunk with true Hollands—and then taught them the art of making bargains.



"MADE THEM DRUNK WITH TRUE HOLLANDS."

A brisk trade for furs was soon opened; the

Dutch traders were scrupulously honest in their dealings, and purchased by weight, establishing it as an invariable table of avoirdupois, that the hand of a Dutchman weighed one pound, and his foot two pounds. It is true, the simple Indians were often puzzled by the great disproportion between bulk and weight, for let them place a bundle of furs, never so large, in one scale, and a Dutchman put his hand or foot in the other, the bundle was sure to kick the beam ;—never was a package of furs known to weigh more than two pounds in the market of Communipaw.

This is a singular fact,—but I have it direct from my great-great-grandfather, who had risen to considerable importance in the colony, being promoted to the office of weigh-master, on account of the uncommon heaviness of his foot.

The Dutch possessions in this part of the globe began now to assume a very thriving appearance, and were comprehended under the general title of Nieuw Nederlandts, on account, as the sage Vander Donck observes, of their great resemblance to the Dutch Netherlands,—which indeed was truly remarkable, excepting that the former were rugged and mountainous, and the latter level and marshy. About this time the tranquillity of the Dutch colonists was



THE OFFICIAL WEIGHT.

doomed to suffer a temporary interruption. In 1614, Captain Sir Samuel Argal, sailing under a commission from Dale, governor of Virginia, visited the Dutch settlements on Hudson River and demanded their submission to the English crown and Virginian dominion. To this arrogant demand, as they were in no condition to resist it, they submitted for the time, like discreet and reasonable men.

It does not appear that the valiant Argal molested the settlement of Communipaw; on the contrary, I am told that when his vessel first hove in sight, the worthy burghers were seized with such a panic, that they fell to smoking their pipes with astonishing vehemence; insomuch that they quickly raised a cloud, which, combining with the surrounding woods and marshes, completely enveloped and concealed their beloved village, and overhung the fair regions of Pavonia,—so that the terrible Captain Argal passed on, totally unsuspicious that a sturdy little Dutch settlement lay snugly couched in the mud, under cover of all this pestilent vapor. In commemoration of this fortunate escape, the worthy inhabitants have continued to smoke, almost without intermission, unto this very day; which is said to be the cause of the remarkable fog which often hangs over Communipaw of a clear afternoon.

Upon the departure of the enemy, our worthy ancestors took full six months to recover their wind and get over the consternation into which they had been thrown. They then



OLOFFE VAN KORTLANDT.

called a council of safety to smoke over the state of the province. At this council presided one Oloffe Van Kortlandt, a personage who was held in great reverence among the sages of Communipaw for the variety and darkness

of his knowledge. He had originally been one of a set of peripatetic philosophers who passed much of their time sunning themselves on the side of the great canal of Amsterdam in Holland; enjoying, like Diogenes, a free and unencumbered estate in sunshine. His name Kortlandt (Shortland or Lackland) was supposed, like that of the illustrious Jean Sansterre, to indicate that he had *no land;* but he insisted, on the contrary, that he had great landed estates somewhere in Terra Incognita; and he had come out to the new world to look after them. He was the first great land-speculator that we read of in these parts.

Like all land-speculators, he was much given to dreaming. Never did anything extraordinary happen at Communipaw but he declared that he had previously dreamt it, being one of those infallible prophets who predict events after they have come to pass. This supernatural gift was as highly valued among the burghers of Pavonia as among the enlightened nations of antiquity. The wise Ulysses was more indebted to his sleeping than his waking moments for his subtle achievements, and seldom undertook any great exploit without first soundly sleeping upon it; and the same may be said of Oloffe Van Kortlandt, who was thence aptly denominated Oloffe the Dreamer.

As yet his dreams and speculations had turned to little personal profit; and he was as much a lack-land as ever. Still he carried a high head in the community; if his sugar-loaf hat was rather the worse for wear, he set it off with a taller cock's-tail; if his shirt was none of the cleanest, he puffed it out the more at the bosom; and if the tail of it peeped out of a hole in his breeches, it at least proved that it really had a tail and was not mere ruffle.

The worthy Van Kortlandt, in the council in question, urged the policy of emerging from the swamps of Communipaw and seeking some more eligible site for the seat of empire. Such, he said, was the advice of the good St. Nicholas, who had appeared to him in a dream the night before; and whom he had known by his broad hat, his long pipe, and the resemblance which he bore to the figure on the bow of the *Goede Vrouw*.

Many have thought this dream was a mere invention of Oloffe Van Kortlandt, who, it is said, had ever regarded Communipaw with an evil eye because he had arrived there after all the land had been shared out, and who was anxious to change the seat of empire to some new place, where he might be present at the distribution of "town lots." But we must not give heed to such insinuations, which are too

apt to be advanced against those worthy gentlemen engaged in laying out towns, and in other land-speculations. For my own part, I am disposed to place the same implicit faith in the vision of Oloffe the Dreamer that was manifested by the honest burghers of Communipaw, who one and all agreed that an expedition should be forthwith fitted out to go on a voyage of discovery in quest of a new seat of empire.

This perilous enterprise was to be conducted by Oloffe himself; who chose as lieutenants or coadjutors Mynheers Abraham Harden Broeck, Jacobus Van Zandt, and Winant Ten Broeck,—three indubitably great men, but of whose history, although I have made diligent inquiry, I can learn but little previous to their leaving Holland. Nor need this occasion much surprise; for adventurers, like prophets, though they make great noise abroad, have seldom much celebrity in their own countries; but this much is certain, that the overflowings and offscourings of a country are invariably composed of the richest parts of the soil. And here I cannot help remarking how convenient it would be to many of our great men and great families of doubtful origin, could they have the privilege of the heroes of yore, who, whenever their origin was involved in obscurity, modestly

announced themselves descended from a god, —and who never visited a foreign country but what they told some cock-and-bull stories about their being kings and princes at home. This venal trespass on the truth, though it has been occasionally played off by some pseudo-marquis, baronet, and other illustrious foreigner, in our land of good-natured credulity, has been completely discountenanced in this skeptical, matter-of-fact age; and I even question whether any tender virgin, who was accidentally and unaccountably enriched with a bantling, would save her character at parlor firesides and evening tea-parties by ascribing the phenomenon to a swan, a shower of gold, or a river god.

Had I the benefit of mythology and classic fable above alluded to, I should have furnished the first of the trio with a pedigree equal to that of the proudest hero of antiquity. His name, Van Zandt, that is to say, *from the sand*, or, in common parlance, from the dirt, gave reason to suppose that, like Triptolemus, Themes, the Cyclops, and the Titans, he had sprung from Dame Terra, on the earth! This supposition is strongly corroborated by his size, for it is well known that all the progeny of mother earth were of a gigantic stature; and Van Zandt, we are told, was a tall, raw-boned

man, above six feet high, with an astonishingly hard head. Nor is this origin of the illustrious Van Zandt a whit more improbable or repugnant to belief than what is related and universally admitted of certain of our greatest, or rather richest men; who, we are told with the utmost gravity, did originally spring from a dunghill!

Of the second of the trio but faint accounts have reached to this time, which mention that he was a sturdy, obstinate, worrying, bustling little man; and, from being usually equipped in an old pair of buckskins, was familiarly dubbed Harden Broeck: that is to say, Hard in the Breech, or, as it was generally rendered, Tough Breeches.

Ten Broeck completed this junto of adventurers. It is a singular but ludicrous fact,—which, were I not scrupulous in recording the whole truth, I should almost be tempted to pass over in silence as incompatible with the gravity and dignity of history,—that this worthy gentleman should likewise have been nicknamed from what in modern times is considered the most ignoble part of the dress. But in truth the small-clothes seems to have been a very dignified garment in the eyes of our venerated ancestors, in all probability from its covering that part of the

body which has been pronounced "the seat of honor."

The name of Ten Broeck, or, as it was sometimes spelled, Tin Broeck, has been in-



TOUGH BREECHES.

differently translated into Ten Breeches and Tin Breeches. Certain elegant and ingenious writers on the subject declare in favor of *Tin* or rather *Thin* Breeches; whence they infer

that the original bearer of it was a poor but merry rogue, whose galligaskins were none of the soundest, and who, peradventure, may have been the author of that truly philosophical stanza :—

> "Then why should we quarrel for riches,
> Or any such glittering toys ;
> A light heart and *thin pair of breeches*,
> Will go through the world, my brave boys !"

The more accurate commentators, however, declare in favor of the other reading, and affirm that the worthy in question was a burly, bulbous man, who, in sheer ostentation of his venerable progenitors, was the first to introduce into the settlement the ancient Dutch fashion of ten pair of breeches.

Such was the trio of coadjutors chosen by Oloffe the Dreamer to accompany him in this voyage into unknown realms ; as to the names of his crews, they have not been handed down by history.

Having, as I before observed, passed much of his life in the open air, among the peripatetic philosophers of Amsterdam, Oloffe had become familiar with the aspect of the heavens, and could as accurately determine when a storm was brewing or a squall rising, as a dutiful husband can foresee, from the brow of

his spouse, when a tempest is gathering about his ears. Having pitched upon a time for his voyage when the skies appeared propitious, he exhorted all his crews to take a good night's rest, wind up their family affairs, and make their wills; precautions taken by our forefathers even in after-times when they became more adventurous, and voyaged to Haverstraw, or Kaatskill, or Groodt Esopus, or any other far country, beyond the great waters of the Tappaan Zee.



Chapter IV.

HOW THE HEROES OF COMMUNIPAW VOYAGED TO HELL-GATE, AND HOW THEY WERE RECEIVED THERE.



AND now the rosy blush of morn began to mantle in the east, and soon the rising sun, emerging from amidst golden and purple clouds, shed his blithesome rays on the tin weathercocks of Communipaw. It was that delicious season of the year, when nature, breaking from the chilling thraldom of old winter, like a blooming damsel from the tyranny of a sordid old father, threw herself, blushing with ten thousand charms, into the arms of youthful spring. Every tufted copse and blooming grove resounded with the notes of hymeneal love. The very insects, as they sipped the dew that gemmed the tender grass of the meadows,

joined in the joyous epithalamium,—the virgin bud timidly put forth its blushes, "the voice of the turtle was heard in the land," and the heart of man dissolved away in tenderness. Oh! sweet Theocritus! had I thine oaten reed, wherewith thou erst did charm the gay Sicilian plains;—or, oh! gentle Bion! thy pastoral pipe, wherein the happy swains of the Lesbian isle so much delighted, then might I attempt to sing, in soft Bucolic or negligent Idyllium, the rural beauties of the scene;—but having nothing, save this jaded goosequill, wherewith to wing my flight, I must fain resign all poetic disportings of the fancy and pursue my narrative in humble prose; comforting myself with the hope, that, though it may not steal so sweetly upon the imagination of my reader, yet it may commend itself with virgin modesty to his better judgment, clothed in the chaste and simple garb of truth.

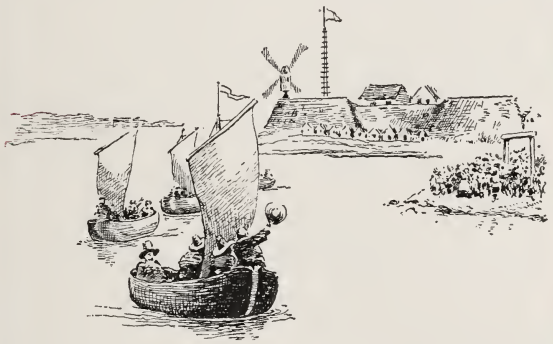
No sooner did the first rays of cheerful Phœbus dart into the windows of Communipaw, than the little settlement was all in motion. Forth issued from his castle the sage Van Kortlandt, and seizing a conch shell, blew a far resounding blast, that soon summoned all his lusty followers. Then did they trudge resolutely down to the water-side, escorted by a

multitude of relatives and friends, who all went down, as the common phrase expresses it, "to see them off." And this shows the antiquity, of those long family processions, often seen in our city, composed of all ages, sizes, and sexes laden with bundles and bandboxes, escorting some bevy of country cousins, about to depart for home in a market-boat.

The good Oloffe bestowed his forces in a squadron of three canoes, and hoisted his flag on board a little round Dutch boat, shaped not unlike a tub, which had formerly been the jolly-boat of the *Goede Vrouw*. And now, all being embarked, they bade farewell to the gazing throng upon the beach, who continued shouting after them, even when out of hearing, wishing them a happy voyage, advising them to take good care of themselves, not to get drowned, with an abundance other of those sage and invaluable cautions, generally given by landsmen to such as go down to the sea in ships, and adventure upon the deep waters. In the meanwhile the voyagers cheerily urged their course across the crystal bosom of the bay, and soon left behind them the green shores of ancient Pavonia.

And first they touched at two small islands which lay nearly opposite Communipaw, and which are said to have been brought into ex-

istence about the time of the great irruption of the Hudson, when it broke through the Highlands and made its way to the ocean.* For in this tremendous uproar of the waters, we are told that many huge fragments of rock and land were rent from the mountains and swept down by this runaway river, for sixty or seventy miles; where some of them ran aground



"THEY BADE FAREWELL TO THE GAZING THRONG UPON THE BEACH."

on the shoals just opposite Communipaw, and formed the identical islands in question, while others drifted out to sea, and were never heard of more! A sufficient proof of the fact is, that

* It is a matter long since established by certain of our philosophers,—that is to say, having been often advanced, and never contradicted, it has grown to be pretty nigh equal to a settled fact,—that the Hudson

the rock which forms the basis of these islands is exactly similar to that of the Highlands, and, moreover, one of our philosophers, who has diligently compared the agreement of their respective surfaces, has even gone so far as to assure me, in confidence, that Gibbet Island was originally nothing more nor less then a wart on Anthony's Nose.*

Leaving these wonderful little isles, they next coasted by Governor's Island since terrible from its frowning fortress and grinning batteries. They would by no means, however, land upon this island, since they doubted much it might be the abode of demons and spirits, which in those days did greatly abound throughout this savage and pagan country.

Just at this time a shoal of jolly porpoises came rolling and tumbling by, turning up

was originally a lake dammed up by the mountains of the Highlands. In process of time, however, becoming very mighty and obstreperous, and the mountains waxing pursy, dropsical, and weak in the back, by reason of their extreme old age, it suddenly rose upon them, and after a violent struggle effected its escape. This is said to have come to pass in very remote time, probably before rivers had lost the art of running uphill. The foregoing is a theory in which I do not pretend to be skilled, notwithstanding that I do fully give it my belief.

* A promontory in the Highlands.

their sleek sides to the sun, and spouting up the briny element in sparkling showers. No sooner did the sage Oloffe mark this, than he was greatly rejoiced. "This," exclaimed he, "if I mistake not, augurs well: the porpoise is a fat, well-conditioned fish,—a burgomaster



"A SHOAL OF JOLLY PORPOISES CAME ROLLING AND TUMBLING BY."

among fishes,—his looks betoken ease, plenty, and prosperity; I greatly admire this round fat fish, and doubt not but this is a happy omen of the success of our undertaking." So saying, he directed his squadron to steer in the track of these alderman fishes.

Turning, therefore, directly to the left, they

swept up the strait vulgarly called East River. And here the rapid tide which courses through this strait, seizing on the gallant tub in which Commodore Van Kortlandt had embarked, hurried it forward with a velocity unparalleled in a Dutch boat, navigated by Dutchmen; insomuch that the good commodore, who had all his life long been accustomed only to the drowsy navigation of canals, was more than ever convinced that they were in the hands of some supernatural power, and that the jolly porpoises were towing them to some fair haven that was to fulfil all their wishes and expectations.

Thus borne away by the resistless current, they doubled that boisterous point of land since called Corlear's Hook * and leaving to the right the rich winding cove of the Wallabout, they drifted into a magnificent expanse of water, surrounded by pleasant shores, whose verdure was exceedingly refreshing to the eye. While the voyagers were looking around them, on what they conceived to be a serene and sunny lake, they beheld at a distance a crew of painted savages, busily employed in fishing, who seemed more like the genii of this romantic region,—their slender canoe lightly balanced like a feather on the undulated surface of the bay.

* Properly spelt *hoeck* (*i. e.*, a point of land).

At sight of these the hearts of the heroes of Communipaw were not a little troubled. But as good fortune would have it, at the bow of the commodore's boat was stationed a very



"AND TURNING AWAY HIS HEAD, FIRED IT MOST INTREPIDLY IN THE FACE OF THE BLESSED SUN."

valiant man, named Hendrick Kip (which, being interpreted, means *chicken*, a name given him in token of his courage). No sooner did he behold these varlet heathens than he trem-

bled with excessive valor, and although a good half-mile distant, he seized a musketoon that lay at hand, and turning away his head, fired it most intrepidly in the face of the blessed sun. The blundering weapon recoiled and gave the valiant Kip an ignominious kick, which laid him prostrate with uplifted heels in the bottom of the boat. But such was the effect of this tremendous fire, that the wild men of the woods, struck with consternation, seized hastily upon their paddles, and shot away into one of the deep inlets of the Long Island shore.

This signal victory gave new spirits to the voyagers; and in honor of the achievement they gave the name of the valiant Kip to the surrounding bay, and it has continued to be called Kip's Bay from that time to the present. The heart of the good Van Kortlandt—who, having no land of his own, was a great admirer of other people's—expanded to the full size of a pepper-corn at the sumptuous prospect of rich unsettled country around him, and falling into a delicious revery, he straightway began to riot in the possession of vast meadows of salt marsh and interminable patches of cabbages. From this delectable vision he was all at once awakened by the sudden turning of the tide, which would soon have hurried him from this land of promise, had not the discreet navigator

given signal to steer for shore; where they accordingly landed hard by the rocky heights of Bellevue,—that happy retreat, where our jolly alderman eat for the good of the city, and fatten the turtle that are sacrificed on civic solemnities.

Here, seated on the greensward, by the side of a small stream that ran sparkling among the grass, they refreshed themselves after the toils of the seas, by feasting lustily on the ample stores which they had provided for this perilous voyage. Thus having well fortified their deliberative powers, they fell into an earnest consultation, what was further to be done. This was the first council-dinner ever eaten at Bellevue by Christian burghers; and here, as tradition relates, did originate the great family feud between the Harden Broecks and the Ten Broecks, which afterwards had a singular influence on the building of the city. The sturdy Harden Broeck, whose eyes had been wondrously delighted with the salt marshes which spread their reeking bosoms along the coast, at the bottom of Kip's Bay, counselled by all means to return thither, and found the intended city. This was strenuously opposed by the unbending Ten Broeck, and many testy arguments passed between them. The particulars of this controversy have not reached us,

which is ever to be lamented; this much is certain, that the sage Oloffe put an end to the dispute by determining to explore still farther in the route which the mysterious porpoises had so clearly pointed out;—whereupon the sturdy Tough Breeches abandoned the expedition, took possession of a neighboring hill, and in a fit of great wrath peopled all that tract of country, which has continued to be inhabited by the Harden Broecks unto this very day.

By this time the jolly Phœbus, like some wanton urchin sporting on the side of a green hill, began to roll down the declivity of the heavens; and now, the tide having once more turned in their favor, the Pavonians again committed themselves to its discretion, and coasting along the western shores, were borne towards the straits of Blackwell's Island.

And here the capricious wanderings of the current occasioned not a little marvel and perplexity to these illustrious mariners. Now would they be caught by the wanton eddies, and, sweeping round a jutting point, would wind deep into some romantic little cove, that indented the fair island of Mannahatta; now were they hurried narrowly by the very bases of impending rocks, mantled with the flaunting grape-vine, and crowned with groves which threw a broad shade on the waves

beneath ; and anon they were borne away into the mid-channel and wafted along with a rapidity that very much discomposed the sage Van Kortlandt, who, as he saw the land swiftly receding on either side, began exceedingly to doubt that *terra firma* was giving them the slip.

Wherever the voyagers turned their eyes, a new creation seemed to bloom around. No signs of human thrift appeared to check the delicious wildness of nature, who here revelled in all her luxuriant variety. Those hills, now bristled, like the fretful porcupine, with rows of poplars, (vain upstart plants ! minions of wealth and fashion !) were then adorned with the vigorous natives of the soil : the lordly oak, the generous chestnut, the graceful elm,—while here and there the tulip-tree reared its majestic head, the giant of the forest. Where now are seen the gay retreats of luxury,—villas half buried in twilight bowers, whence the amorous flute oft breathes the sighings of some city swain,—there the fish-hawk built his solitary nest on some dry tree that overlooked his watery domain. The timid deer fed undisturbed along those shores now hallowed by the lovers' moonlight walk, and printed by the slender foot of beauty ; and a savage solitude extended over those happy regions, where now

are reared the stately towers of the Joneses, the Schermerhornes, and the Rhinelanders.

Thus gliding in silent wonder through these new and unknown scenes, the gallant squadron of Pavonia swept by the foot of a promontory, which strutted forth boldly into the waves, and seemed to frown upon them as they brawled against its base. This is the bluff well known to modern mariners by the name of Gracie's Point, from the fair castle which, like an elephant, it carries upon its back. And here broke upon their view a wild and varied prospect, where land and water were beauteously intermingled, as though they had combined to heighten and set off each other's charms. To the right lay the sedgy point of Blackwell's Island, dressed in the fresh garniture of living green,—beyond it stretched the pleasant coast of Sundswick, and the small harbor well known by the name of Hallet's Cove,—a place infamous in latter days, by reason of its being the haunt of pirates who infest these seas, robbing orchards and watermelon patches, and insulting gentlemen navigators, when voyaging in their pleasure-boats. To the left a deep bay, or rather creek, gracefully receded between shores fringed with forests, and forming a kind of vista, through which were beheld the sylvan regions of Haerlem, Morrisania, and East

Chester. Here the eye reposed with delight on a richly wooded country, diversified by tufted knolls, shadowy intervals, and waving lines of upland, swelling above each other, while over the whole the purple mists of spring diffused a hue of soft voluptuousness.



"ALONG THOSE SHORES."

Just before them the grand course of the stream, making a sudden bend, wound among embowered promontories and shores of emerald verdure, that seemed to melt into the wave. A character of gentleness and mild fertility pre-

vailed around. The sun had just descended, and the thin haze of twilight, like a transparent veil drawn over the bosom of virgin beauty, heightened the charms which it half concealed.

Ah! witching scenes of foul delusion. Ah! hapless voyagers, gazing with simple wonder on these Circean shores! Such, alas! are they, poor easy souls, who listen to the seductions of a wicked world,—treacherous are its smiles! fatal its caresses. He who yields to its enticements launches upon a whelming tide, and trusts his feeble bark among the dimpling eddies of a whirlpool! And thus it fared with the worthies of Pavonia, who, little mistrusting the guileful scenes before them, drifted quietly on, until they were aroused by an uncommon tossing and agitation of their vessels. For now the late dimpling current began to brawl around them, and the waves to boil and foam with horrific fury. Awakened as if from a dream, the astonished Oloffe bawled aloud to put about, but his words were lost amid the roaring of the waters. And now ensued a scene of direful consternation. At one time they were borne with dreadful velocity among tumultuous breakers; at another, hurried down boisterous rapids. Now they were nearly dashed upon the Hen and Chickens (infamous



"AND ANON THEY SEEMED SINKING INTO YAWNING GULFS."

rocks !—more voracious than Scylla and her whelps), and anon they seemed sinking into yawning gulfs, that threatened to entomb them beneath the waves. All the elements combined to produce a hideous confusion. The waters raged, the winds howled ; and as they were hurried along, several of the astonished mariners beheld the rocks and trees of the neighboring shores driving through the air !

At length the mighty tub of Commodore Van Kortlandt was drawn into the vortex of that tremendous whirlpool called the Pot, where it was whirled about in giddy mazes, until the senses of the good commander and his crew were overpowered by the horror of the scene, and the strangeness of the revolution.

How the gallant squadron of Pavonia was snatched from the jaws of this modern Charybdis, has never been truly made known, for so many survived to tell the tale, and, what is still more wonderful, told it in so many different ways, that there has ever prevailed a great variety of opinions on the subject.

As to the commodore and his crew, when they came to their senses, they found themselves stranded on the Long Island shore. The worthy commodore, indeed, used to relate many and wonderful stories of his adventures in this time of peril : how that he saw spectres

flying in the air, and heard the yelling of hobgoblins, and put his hand into the pot when they were whirled round, and found the water scalding hot, and beheld several uncouth-looking beings seated on rocks and skimming it with huge ladles ; but particularly he declared with great exultation, that he saw the losel



THE DEVIL SITTING ASTRIDE OF THE HOG'S BACK AND PLAYING ON A FIDDLE.

porpoises, which had betrayed them into this peril, some broiling on the Gridiron, and others hissing on the Frying-pan !

These, however, were considered by many as mere fantasies of the commodore, while he

lay in a trance; especially as he was known to be given to dreaming; and the truth of them has never been clearly ascertained. It is certain, however, that to the accounts of Oloffe and his followers may be traced the various traditions handed down of this marvellous strait: as how the devil has been seen there, sitting astride of the Hog's Back and playing on the fiddle,—how he broils fish there before a storm; and many other stories in which we must be cautious of putting too much faith. In consequence of all these terrific circumstances, the Pavonian commander gave this pass the name of *Helle-gat*, or, as it has been interpreted, *Hell-Gate**; which it continues to bear at the present day.

* This is a narrow strait in the Sound, at the distance of six miles above New York. It is dangerous to shipping, unless under the care of skilful pilots, by reason of numerous rocks, shelves, and whirlpools. These have received sundry appellations, such as the Gridiron, Frying-pan, Hog's Back, Pot, etc., and are very violent and turbulent at certain times of tide. Certain mealy-mouthed men, of squeamish consciences, who are loth to give the Devil his due, have softened the above characteristic name into *Hurl-gate*, forsooth! Let those take care how they venture into the Gate, or they may be hurled into the Pot before they are aware of it. The name of this strait, as given by our author, is supported by the map in

Vander Donck's *History*, published in 1656,—by Ogilvie's *History of America*, 1671,—as also by a journal still extant, written in the sixteenth century, and to be found in Hazard's *State Papers*. And an old MS. written in French, speaking of various alterations in names about this city, observes, "*De Hell-gate*, trou d'Enfer ils ont fait *Hell-gate*, Porte d'Enfer."



Chapter V.

HOW THE HEROES OF COMMUNIPA'V RETURNED SOMEWHAT WISER THAN THEY WENT—AND HOW THE SAGE OLOFFE DREAMED A DREAM—AND THE DREAM THAT HE DREAMED.



THE darkness of night had closed upon this disastrous day, and a doleful night was it to the shipwrecked Pavonians, whose ears were incessantly assailed with the raging of the elements, and the howling of the hobgoblins that infested this perfidious strait. But when the morning dawned, the horrors of the preceding evening had passed away; rapids, breakers, and whirlpools had disappeared; the stream again ran smooth and dimpling, and having changed its tide, rolled gently back, towards the quarter where lay their much-regretted home.

The woe-begone heroes of Communipaw eyed each other with rueful countenances; their squadron had been totally dispersed by the late disaster. Some were cast upon the western shore, where, headed by one Ruleff Hopper, they took possession of all the country lying about the six-mile stone; which is held by the Hoppers at this present writing.

The Waldrons were driven by stress of weather to a distant coast, where, having with them a jug of genuine Hollands, they were enabled to conciliate the savages, setting up a kind of tavern; whence, it is said, did spring the fair town of Haerlem, in which their descendants have ever since continued to be reputable publicans. As to the Suydams, they were thrown upon the Long Island coast, and may still be found in those parts. But the most singular luck attended the great Ten Broeck, who, falling overboard, was miraculously preserved from sinking by the multitude of his nether garments. Thus buoyed up, he floated on the waves like a merman, or like an angler's dobber, until he landed safely on a rock, where he was found the next morning, busily drying his many breeches in the sunshine.

I forbear to treat of the long consultation of Oloffe with his remaining followers, in

which they determined that it would never do to found a city in so diabolical a neighborhood. Suffice it in simple brevity to say, that they once more committed themselves, with fear and trembling, to the briny elements, and steered their course back again through the scenes of their yesterday's voyage, determined no longer to roam in search of distant sites, but to settle themselves down in the marshy regions of Pavonia.

Scarce, however, had they gained a distant view of Communipaw, when they were encountered by an obstinate eddy, which opposed their homeward voyage. Weary and dispirited as they were, they yet tugged a feeble oar against the stream; until, as if to settle the strife, half a score of potent billows rolled the tub of Commodore Van Kortlandt high and dry on the long point of an island which divided the bosom of the bay.

Some pretend that these billows were sent by old Neptune to strand the expedition on a spot whereon was to be founded his stronghold in this western world; others, more pious, attribute everything to the guardianship of the good St. Nicholas; and after-events will be found to corroborate this opinion. Oloffe Van Kortlandt was a devout trencherman. Every repast was a kind of religious rite with him;

and his first thought on finding himself once more on dry ground, was, how he should contrive to celebrate his wonderful escape from Hell-gate and all its horrors by a solemn banquet. The stores which had been provided for the voyage by the good housewives of Communipaw



TEN BROECK DRYING HIS BREECHES.

were nearly exhausted, but, in casting his eyes about, the commodore beheld that the shore abounded with oysters. A great store of these was instantly collected; a fire was made at the foot of a tree; all hands fell to roasting and broiling and stewing and frying, and a

sumptuous repast was soon set forth. This is thought to be the origin of those civic feasts with which, to the present day, all our public affairs are celebrated, and in which the oyster is ever sure to play an important part.

On the present occasion, the worthy Van Kortlandt was observed to be particularly zealous in his devotions to the trencher; for having the cares of the expedition especially committed to his care, he deemed it incumbent on him to eat profoundly for the public good. In proportion as he filled himself to the very brim with the dainty viands before him, did the heart of this excellent burgher rise up towards his throat, until he seemed crammed and almost choked with good eating and good-nature. And at such times it is, when a man's heart is in his throat, that he may more truly be said to speak from it, and his speeches abound with kindness and good fellowship. Thus having swallowed the last possible morsel, and washed it down with a fervent potation, Oloffe felt his heart yearning, and his whole frame in a manner dilating with unbounded benevolence. Everything around him seemed excellent and delightful; and laying his hands on each side of his capacious periphery, and rolling his half-closed eyes around on the beautiful diversity of land and

water before him, he exclaimed, in a fat half-smothered voice, "What a charming prospect!" The words died away in his throat,—he seemed to ponder on the fair scene for a moment,—his eyelids heavily closed over their



"IN DIM OBSCURITY HE SAW SHADOWED OUT PALACES AND DOMES AND LOFTY SPIRES."

orbs,—his head drooped upon his bosom,—he slowly sank upon the green turf, and a deep sleep stole gradually over him.

And the sage Oloffe dreamed a dream,—and lo, the good St. Nicholas came riding over the tops of the trees, in that self-same wagon wherein he brings his yearly presents to chil-

dren, and he descended hard by where the heroes of Communipaw had made their late repast. And he lit his pipe by the fire, and sat himself down and smoked; and as he smoked, the smoke from his pipe ascended into the air and spread like a cloud overhead. And Oloffe bethought him, and he hastened and climbed up to the top of one of the tallest trees, and saw that the smoke spread over a great extent of country; and as he considered it more attentively, he fancied that the great volume of smoke assumed a variety of marvellous forms, where in dim obscurity he saw shadowed out palaces and domes and lofty spires, all of which lasted but a moment, and then faded away, until the whole rolled off, and nothing but the green woods were left. And when St. Nicholas had smoked his pipe, he twisted it in his hatband, and laying his finger beside his nose, gave the astonished Van Kortlandt a very significant look; then, mounting his wagon, he returned over the tree-tops and disappeared.

And Van Kortlandt awoke from his sleep greatly instructed; and he aroused his companions and related to them his dream, and interpreted it, that it was the will of St. Nicholas that they should settle down and build the city here; and that the smoke of the pipe was

a type how vast would be the extent of the city, inasmuch as the volumes of its smoke would spread over a wide extent of country. And they all with one voice assented to this interpretation, excepting Mynheer Ten Broeck, who declared the meaning to be that it would be a city wherein a little fire would occasion a great smoke, or, in other words, a very vaporing little city ;—both which interpretations have strangely come to pass !

The great object of their perilous expedition, therefore, being thus happily accomplished, the voyagers returned merrily to Communipaw—where they were received with great rejoicings. And here, calling a general meeting of all the wise men and the dignitaries of Pavonia, they related the whole history of their voyage, and of the dream of Oloffe Van Kortlandt. And the people lifted up their voices and blessed the good St. Nicholas ; and from that time forth the sage Van Kortlandt was held in more honor than ever, for his great talent at dreaming, and was pronounced a most useful citizen and a right good man—when he was asleep.

Chapter VII.

CONTAINING AN ATTEMPT AT ETYMOLOGY—AND OF THE FOUNDING OF THE GREAT CITY OF NEW AMSTERDAM.



THE original name of the island, whereon the squadron of Communipaw was thus propitiously thrown, is a matter of some dispute, and has already undergone considerable vitiation,—a melancholy proof of the instability of all sublunary things, and the vanity of all our hopes of lasting fame; for who can expect his name will live to posterity, when even the names of mighty islands are thus soon lost in contradiction and uncertainty!

The name most current at the present day, and which is likewise countenanced by the great historian Vander Donck, is MANHAT-

TAN; which is said to have originated in a custom among the squaws, in the early settletlement, of wearing men's hats, as is still done among many tribes. "Hence," as we are told by an old governor who was somewhat of a wag, and flourished almost a century since, and had paid a visit to the wits of Philadelphia,—"hence arose the appellation of man-hat-on, first given to the Indians, and afterwards to the island,"—a stupid joke! but well enough for a governor.

Among the more venerable sources of information on this subject is that valuable history of the American possessions, written by Master Richard Blome, in 1687, wherein it is called Manhadaes and Manahanent; nor must I forget the excellent little book, full of precious matter, of that authentic historian John Josselyn, Gent., who expressly calls it Manadaes.

Another etymology, still more ancient, and sanctioned by the countenance of our ever-to-be-lamented Dutch ancestors, is that found in certain letters still extant,* which passed between the early governors and their neighboring powers, wherein it is called indifferently Monhattoes, Munhatos, and Manhattoes, which are evidently unimportant variations of

* *Vide*, Hazard's *Col. Stat. Pap.*

the same name; for our wise forefathers set little store by those niceties either in orthography or orthoepy, which form the sole study and ambition of many learned men and women of this hypercritical age. This last name is said to be derived from the great Indian spirit Manetho, who was supposed to make this island his favorite abode, on account of its uncommon delights. For the Indian traditions affirm that the bay was once a translucid lake, filled with silver and golden fish, in the midst of which lay this beautiful island, covered with every variety of fruits and flowers; but that the sudden irruption of the Hudson laid waste these blissful scenes, and Manetho took his flight beyond the great waters of Ontario.

These, however, are very fabulous legends, to which very cautious credence must be given; and though I am willing to admit the last-quoted orthography of the name as very fit for prose, yet is there another which I peculiarly delight in, as at once poetical, melodious, and significant, and which we have on the authority of Master Juet, who, in his account of the voyage of the great Hudson, calls this MANNA-HATA, that is to say, the island of manna, or, in other words, a land flowing with milk and honey.

Still, my deference to the learned obliges me to notice the opinion of the worthy Dominie Heckwelder, which ascribes the name to a great drunken bout held on the island by the



MASTER JUET.

Dutch discoverers, whereat they made certain of the natives most ecstatically drunk for the first time in their lives; who, being delighted with their jovial entertainment, gave

the place the name of Mannahattanink, that is to say, The Island of Jolly Topers: a name which it continues to merit to the present day.*

*MSS. of the Rev. John Heckwelder, in the archives of the New York Historical Society.



Chapter VII.

HOW THE PEOPLE OF PAVONIA MIGRATED FROM COMMUNIPAW TO THE ISLAND OF MANNA-HATA—AND HOW OLOFFE THE DREAMER PROVED HIMSELF A GREAT LAND-SPECULATOR.



IT having been solemnly resolved that the seat of empire should be removed from the green shores of Pavonia to the pleasant island of Manna-hata, everybody was anxious to embark under the standard of Oloffe the Dreamer, and to be among the first sharers of the promised land. A day was appointed for the grand migration, and on that day little Communipaw was in a buzz and a bustle like a hive in swarming-time. Houses were turned inside out and stripped of the venerable furniture which had come from Holland; all the community, great and small,

black and white, man, woman, and child, was in commotion, forming lines from the houses to the water-side, like lines of ants from an ant-hill ; everybody laden with some article of household furniture ; while busy house-wives plied backwards and forwards along the lines, helping everything forward by the nimbleness of their tongues.

By degrees a fleet of boats and canoes were piled up with all kinds of household articles : ponderous tables ; chests of drawers resplendent with brass ornaments ; quaint corner-cupboards ; beds and bedsteads ; with any quantity of pots, kettles, frying-pans, and Dutch ovens. In each boat embarked a whole family, from the robustious burgher down to the cats and dogs and little negroes. In this way they set off across the mouth of the Hudson, under the guidance of Oloffe the Dreamer, who hoisted his standard on the leading boat.

This memorable migration took place on the first of May, and was long cited in tradition as the *grand moving*. The anniversary of it was piously observed among the "sons of the pilgrims of Communipaw," by turning their houses topsy-turvy and carrying all the furniture through the streets, in emblem of the swarming of the parent-hive ; and this is the real origin of the universal agitation and



MYNHEER TEN BROECK AS A LAND SURVEYOR.

"moving" by which this most restless of cities is literally turned out of doors on every May-day.

As the little squadron from Communipaw drew near to the shores of Manna-hata, a sachem, at the head of a band of warriors, appeared to oppose their landing. Some of the most zealous of the pilgrims were for chastising this insolence with powder and ball, according to the approved mode of discoverers; but the sage Oloffe gave them the significant sign of St. Nicholas, laying his finger beside his nose and winking hard with one eye; whereupon his followers perceived that there was something sagacious in the wind. He now addressed the Indians in the blandest terms; and made such tempting display of beads, hawks'-bells, and red blankets, that he was soon permitted to land, and a great land-speculation ensued. And here let me give the true story of the original purchase of the site of this renowned city, about which so much has been said and written. Some affirm that the first cost was but sixty guilders. The learned Dominie Heckwelder records a tradition* that the Dutch discoverers bargained for only so much land as the hide of a bullock would cover; but that

* MSS. of the Rev. John Heckwelder; New York Historical Society.

they cut the hide in strips no thicker than a child's finger, so as to take in a large portion of land, and to take in the Indians into the bargain. This, however, is an old fable which the worthy Dominie may have borrowed from antiquity. The true version is, that Oloffe Van Kortlandt bargained for just so much land as a man could cover with his nether garments. The terms being concluded, he produced his friend Mynheer Ten Broeck as the man whose breeches were to be used in measurement. The simple savages, whose ideas of man's nether garments had never expanded beyond the dimensions of a breechclout, stared with astonishment and dismay as they beheld this bulbous-bottomed burgher peeled like an onion, and breeches after breeches spread forth over the land until they covered the actual site of this venerable city.

This is the true history of the adroit bargain by which the island of Manhattan was bought for sixty guilders; and in corroboration of it I will add, that Mynheer Ten Breeches, for his services on this memorable occasion, was elevated to the office of land-measurer; which he afterwards exercised in the colony.

Chapter VIII.

ON THE FOUNDING AND NAMING OF THE NEW CITY; OF THE CITY ARMS; AND OF THE DIREFUL FEUD BETWEEN TEN BREECHES AND TOUGH BREECHES.



THE land being thus fairly purchased of the Indians, a circumstance very unusual in the history of colonization, and strongly illustrative of the honesty of our Dutch progenitors, a stockade fort and trading-house were forthwith erected on an eminence in front of the place where the good St. Nicholas had appeared in a vision to Oloffe the Dreamer, and which, as has already been observed, was the identical place at present known as the Bowling Green.

Around this fort a progeny of little Dutch-built houses, with tiled roofs and weather-cocks, soon sprang up, nestling themselves under its walls for protection, as a brood of

half-fledged chickens nestle under the wings of the mother hen. The whole was surrounded by an enclosure of strong palisadoes, to guard against any sudden irruption of the savages. Outside of these extended the cornfields and cabbage-gardens of the community, with here and there an attempt at a tobacco-plantation; all covering those tracts of country at present called Broadway, Wall Street, William Street, and Pearl Street.

I must not omit to mention, that, in portioning out the land, a goodly "bowerie," or farm, was allotted to the sage Oloffe in consideration of the service he had rendered to the public by his talent at dreaming; and the site of his "bowerie" is known by the name of Kortlandt (or Cortlandt) Street to the present day.

And now the infant settlement having advanced in age and stature, it was thought high time it should receive an honest Christian name. Hitherto it had gone by the original Indian name Manna-hata, or, as some will have it, "The Manhattoes"; but this was now decried as savage and heathenish, and as tending to keep up the memory of the pagan brood that originally possessed it. Many were the consultations held upon the subject, without coming to a conclusion, for though every-

body condemned the old name, nobody could invent a new one. At length, when the council was almost in despair, a burgher, remarkable for the size and squareness of his head proposed that they should call it New Amsterdam. The proposition took everybody by surprise; it was so striking, so apposite, so ingenious. The name was adopted by acclamation, and New Amsterdam the metropolis was thenceforth called. Still, however, the early authors of the province continued to call it by the general appellation of "The Manhattoes," and the poets fondly clung to the euphonious name of Manna-hata; but those are a kind of folk whose tastes and notions should go for nothing in matters of this kind.

Having thus provided the embryo city with a name, the next was to give it an armorial bearing or device, as some cities have a rampant lion, others a soaring eagle,—emblematical, no doubt, of the valiant and high-flying qualities of the inhabitants; so, after mature deliberation, a sleek beaver was emblazoned on the city standard, as indicative of the amphibious origin, and patient, persevering habits of the New Amsterdammers.

The thriving state of the settlement and the rapid increase of houses soon made it necessary to arrange some plan upon which the city

should be built; but at the very first consultation held on the subject, a violent discussion arose; and I mention it with much sorrowing as being the first altercation on record in the councils of New Amsterdam. It was, in fact, a breaking forth of the grudge and heart-burning that had existed between those two eminent burghers, Mynheers Ten Broeck and Harden Broeck, ever since their unhappy dispute on the coast of Bellevue. The great Harden Broeck had waxed very wealthy and powerful, from his domains, which embraced the whole chain of Apulean mountains that stretched along the gulf of Kip's Bay, and from part of which his descendants have been expelled in latter ages by the powerful clans of the Joneses and the Schermerhornes.

An ingenious plan for the city was offered by Mynheer Harden Broeck, who proposed that it should be cut up and intersected by canals, after the manner of the most admired cities in Holland. To this Mynheer Ten Broeck was diametrically opposed, suggesting, in place thereof, that they should run out docks and wharves, by means of piles driven into the bottom of the river, on which the towns should be built. "By these means," said he triumphantly, "shall we rescue a considerable space of territory from these immense rivers, and build

a city that shall rival Amsterdam, Venice, or any amphibious city in Europe." To this proposition, Harden Broeck (or Tough Breeches) replied, with a look of as much scorn as he could possibly assume. He cast the utmost censure upon the plan of his antagonist, as being preposterous and against the very order of things, as he would leave to every true Hollander. "For what," said he, "is a town without canals?—it is like a body without veins and arteries, and must perish for want of a free circulation of the vital fluid." Ten Breeches, on the contrary, retorted with a sarcasm upon his antagonist, who was somewhat of an arid, dry-boned habit: he remarked, that as to the circulation of the blood being necessary to existence, Mynheer Tough Breeches was a living contradiction to his own assertion: for everybody knew there had not a drop of blood circulated through his wind-dried carcase for good ten years, and yet there was not a greater busy-body in the whole colony. Personalities have seldom much effect in making converts in argument; nor have I ever seen a man convinced of error by being convicted of deformity. At least, such was not the case at present. If Ten Breeches was very happy in sarcasm, Tough Breeches, who was a sturdy little man, and never gave up the last word,

rejoined with increasing spirit; Ten Breeches had the advantage of the greatest volubility, but Tough Breeches had that invaluable coat of mail in argument, called obstinacy. Ten



THE ARGUMENT.

Breeches had, therefore, the most mettle, but Tough Breeches the best bottom; so that though Ten Breeches made a dreadful clattering about his ears, and battered and belabored him with hard words and sound arguments, yet

Tough Breeches hung on most resolutely to the last. They parted, therefore, as is usual in all arguments where both parties are in the right, without coming to any conclusion ;—but they hated each other most heartily forever after, and a similar breech with that between the houses of Capulet and Montague did ensue between the families of Ten Breeches and Tough Breeches.

I would not fatigue my reader with these dull matters of fact, but that my duty as a faithful historian requires that I should be particular ; and in truth, as I am now treating of the critical period when our city, like a young twig, first received the twists and turns which have since contributed to give it its present picturesque irregularity, I cannot be too minute in detailing their first causes.

After the unhappy altercation I have just mentioned, I do not find that anything further was said on the subject worthy of being recorded. The council, consisting of the largest and oldest heads in the community, met regularly once a week, to ponder on this momentous subject ; but, either they were deterred by the war of words they had witnessed, or they were naturally averse to the exercise of the tongue, and the subsequent exercise of the brains,—certain it is, the most profound

silence was maintained,—the question as usual lay on the table,—the members quietly smoked their pipes, making but few laws, without ever enforcing any,—and in the meantime the affairs of the settlement went on—as it pleased God.



THE SECRETARY.

As most of the council were but little skilled in the mystery of combining pot-hooks and hangers, they determined most judiciously not to puzzle either themselves or posterity with voluminous records. The secretary, however, kept the minutes of the council, with tolerable

precision, in a large vellum folio, fastened with massy brass clasps ; the journal of each meeting consisted but of two lines, stating in Dutch, that "the council sat this day, and smoked twelve pipes, on the affairs of the colony." By which it appears that the first settlers did not regulate their time by hours, but pipes, in the same manner as they measure distances in Holland at this very time : an admirably exact measurement, as a pipe in the mouth of a true-born Dutchman is never liable to those accidents and irregularities that are continually putting our clocks out of order.

In this manner did the profound council of New Amsterdam smoke, and doze, and ponder, from week to week, month to month, and year to year, in what manner they should construct their infant settlement ;—meanwhile, the town took care of itself, and like a sturdy brat which is suffered to run about wild, unshackled by clouts and bandages, and other abominations by which your notable nurses and sage old women cripple and disfigure the children of men, increased so rapidly in strength and magnitude, that before the honest burgomasters had determined upon a plan, it was too late to put it in execution,—whereupon they wisely abandoned the subject altogether.

Chapter IX.

HOW THE CITY OF NEW AMSTERDAM WAXED GREAT UNDER THE PROTECTION OF ST. NICHOLAS AND THE ABSENCE OF LAWS AND STATUTES—HOW OLOFFE THE DREAMER BEGAN TO DREAM OF AN EXTENSION OF EMPIRE, AND OF THE EFFECT OF HIS DREAMS.



THERE is something exceedingly delusive in thus looking back through the long vista of departed years, and catching a glimpse of the fairy realms of antiquity. Like a landscape melting into distance, they receive a thousand charms from their very obscurity, and the fancy delights to fill up their outlines with graces and excellences of its own creation. Thus loom on my imagination those happier days of our city, when as yet New Amsterdam was a mere pastoral town, shrouded in groves of sycamores and willows, and surrounded by

trackless forests and wide-spreading waters, that seemed to shut out all the cares and vanities of a wicked world.

In those days did this embryo city present the rare and noble spectacle of a community governed without laws; and thus being left to its own course, and the fostering care of Providence, increased as rapidly as though it had been burdened with a dozen panniers full of those sage laws usually heaped on the backs of young cities—in order to make them grow. And in this particular I greatly admire the wisdom and sound knowledge of human nature, displayed by the sage Oloffe the Dreamer and his fellow-legislators. For my part, I have not so bad an opinion of mankind as many of my brother philosophers. I do not think poor human nature so sorry a piece of workmanship as they would make it out to be; and as far as I have observed, I am fully satisfied that man, if left to himself, would about as readily go right as wrong. It is only this eternally sounding in his ears that it is his duty to go right, which makes him go the very reverse. The noble independence of his nature revolts at this intolerable tyranny of law, and the perpetual interference of officious morality, which are ever besetting his path with finger-posts and directions to "keep to the right, as the law

directs" ; and like a spirited urchin, he turns directly contrary, and gallops through mud and mire, over hedges and ditches, merely to show that he is a lad of spirit, and out of his leading-strings. And these opinions are amply substantiated by what I have above said of our worthy ancestors ; who never being be-preached and be-lectured, and guided and governed by statutes and laws and by-laws, as are their more enlightened descendants, did one and all demean themselves honestly and peaceably, out of pure ignorance, or, in other words, because they knew no better.

Nor must I omit to record one of the earliest measures of this infant settlement, inasmuch as it shows the piety of our forefathers, and that, like good Christians, they were always ready to serve God, after they had first served themselves. Thus, having quietly settled themselves down, and provided for their own comfort, they bethought themselves of testifying their gratitude to the great and good St. Nicholas, for his protecting care, in guiding them to this delectable abode. To this end they built a fair and goodly chapel within the fort, which they consecrated to his name ; whereupon he immediately took the town of New Amsterdam under his peculiar patronage, and he has ever since been, and I devoutly hope,

will ever be, the tutelar saint of this excellent city.

At this early period was instituted that pious ceremony, still religiously observed in all our ancient families of the right breed, of hanging up a stocking in the chimney on St. Nicholas eve; which stocking is always found in the morning miraculously filled; for the good St. Nicholas has ever been a great giver of gifts, particularly to children.

I am moreover told that there is a little legendary book, somewhere extant, written in Low Dutch, which says, that the image of this renowned saint, which whilom graced the bowsprit of the *Goede Vrouw*, was elevated in front of this chapel, in the centre of what in modern days is called the Bowling Green,—on the very spot, in fact, where he appeared in vision to Oloffe the Dreamer. And the legend further treats of divers miracles wrought by the mighty pipe which the saint held in his mouth, a whiff of which was a sovereign cure for indigestion,—an invaluable relic in this colony of brave trencher-men. As, however, in spite of the most diligent search, I cannot lay my hands upon this little book, I must confess that I entertain considerable doubt on the subject.

Thus benignly fostered by the good St.

Nicholas, the infant city thrived apace. Hordes of painted savages, it is true, still lurked about the unsettled parts of the island. The hunter still pitched his bower of skins



ST. NICHOLAS.

and bark beside the rills that ran through the cool and shady glens, while here and there might be seen, on some sunny knoll, a group of Indian wigwams, whose smoke arose above

the neighboring trees, and floated in the transparent atmosphere. A mutual good-will, however, existed between these wandering beings and the burghers of New Amsterdam. Our benevolent forefathers endeavored as much as possible to ameliorate their situation, by giving them gin, rum, and glass beads, in exchange for their peltries; for it seems the kind-hearted Dutchmen had conceived a great friendship for their savage neighbors, on account of their being pleasant men to trade with, and little skilled in the art of making a bargain.

Now and then a crew of these half-human sons of the forest would make their appearance in the streets of New Amsterdam, fantastically painted and decorated with beads and flaunting feathers, sauntering about with an air of listless indifference,—sometimes in the market-place, instructing the little Dutch boys in the use of the bow and arrow,—at other times, inflamed with liquor, swaggering and whooping and yelling about the town like so many fiends, to the great dismay of all the good wives, who would hurry their children into the house, fasten the doors, and throw water upon the enemy from the garret windows. It is worthy of mention here, that our forefathers were very particular in holding up these wild men as excellent domestic examples—and for rea-



COOLING THE ARDOR OF THE ENEMY.

sons that may be gathered from the history of Master Ogilby, who tells us, that "for the least offence the bridegroom soundly beats his wife and turns her out of doors, and marries another, insomuch that some of them have every year a new wife." Whether this awful example had any influence or not, history does not mention; but it is certain that our grandmothers were miracles of fidelity and obedience.

True it is, that the good understanding between our ancestors and their savage neighbors was liable to occasional interruptions, and I have heard my grandmother, who was a very wise old woman, and well versed in the history of these parts, tell a long story of a winter's evening, about a battle between the New Amsterdammers and the Indians, which was known by the name of the *Peach war*, and which took place near a peach orchard, in a dark glen, which for a long time went by the name of Murderer's Valley.

The legend of this sylvan war was long current among the nurses, old wives, and other ancient chroniclers of the place; but time and improvement have almost obliterated both the tradition and the scene of battle; for what was once the blood-stained valley is now in the centre of this populous city, and known by the

name of *Dey Street.* I know not whether it was to this "Peach war," and the acquisitions of Indian land which may have grown out of it, that we may ascribe the first seeds of the spirit of "annexation" which now began to manifest themselves. Hitherto the ambition of the worthy burghers had been confined to the lovely island of Manna-hata ; and Spiten Devil on the Hudson, and Hell-gate on the Sound, were to them the pillars of Hercules, the *ne plus ultra* of human enterprise. Shortly after the Peach war, however, a restless spirit was observed among the New Amsterdammers, who began to cast wistful looks upon the wild lands of their Indian neighbors ; for, somehow or other, wild Indian land always looks greener in the eyes of settlers than the land they occupy. It is hinted that Oloffe the Dreamer encouraged these notions ; having, as has been shown, the inherent spirit of a land speculator, which had been wonderfully quickened and expanded since he had become a landholder. Many of the common people, who had never before owned a foot of land, now began to be discontented with the town lots which had fallen to their shares ; others, who had snug farms and tobacco-plantations, found they had not sufficient elbow-room, and began to question the rights of the Indians to

the vast regions they pretended to hold—while the good Oloffe indulged in magnificent dreams of foreign conquest and great patroonships in the wilderness.

The results of these dreams were certain exploring expeditions, sent forth in various directions, to "sow the seeds of empire," as it was said. The earliest of these were conducted by Hans Reinier Oothout, an old navigator, famous for the sharpness of his vision, who could see land when it was quite out of sight to ordinary mortals, and who had a spy-glass covered with a bit of tarpauling, with which he could spy up the crookedest river quite to its head-waters. He was accompanied by Mynheer Ten Breeches, as land-measurer, in case of any dispute with the Indians.

What was the consequence of these exploring expeditions? In a little while we find a frontier post or trading-house called Fort Nassau, established far to the south on Delaware River; another, called Fort Goed Hoep (or Good Hope), on the Varsche, or Fresh, or Connecticut River, and another, called Fort Aurania (now Albany), away up the Hudson River; while the boundaries of the province kept extending on every side, nobody knew whither, far into the regions of Terra Incognita.

Of the boundary feuds and troubles which the ambitious little province brought upon itself by these indefinite expansions of its territory, we shall treat at large in the after-pages of this eventful history; sufficient for



HANS REINIER OOTHOUT.

the present is it to say that the swelling importance of the New Netherlands awakened the attention of the mother-country, who, finding it likely to yield much revenue and no trouble, began to take that interest in its

welfare which knowing people evince for rich relations.

But as this opens a new era in the fortunes of New Amsterdam, I will here put an end to this second book of my history, and will treat of the maternal policy of the mother-country in my next.



Book III.

IN WHICH IS RECORDED THE GOLDEN REIGN OF WOUTER VAN TWILLER.



Chapter II.

OF THE RENOWNED WOUTER VAN TWILLER, HIS UNPARALLELED VIRTUES—AS LIKEWISE HIS UNUTTERABLE WISDOM IN THE LAW-CASE OF WANDLE SCHOONHOVEN AND BAREND BLEECKER—AND THE GREAT ADMIRATION OF THE PUBLIC THEREAT.



GRIEVOUS and very much to be commiserated is the task of the feeling historian, who writes the history of his native land. If it fall to his lot to be the recorder of calamity or crime, the mournful page is watered with his tears; nor can he recall the most prosperous and blissful era, without a melancholy sigh at the reflection that it has passed away forever! I know not whether it be owing to an immoderate love for the simplicity of former times, or to that certain tenderness of heart incident to all sentimental historians; but I candidly

confess that I cannot look back on the happier days of our city, which I now describe, without great dejection of spirit. With faltering hand do I withdraw the curtain of oblivion, that veils the modest merit of our venerable ancestors, and as their figures rise to my mental vision, humble myself before their mighty shades.

Such are my feelings when I revisit the family mansion of the Knickerbockers, and spend a lonely hour in the chamber where hang the portraits of my forefathers, shrouded in dust, like the forms they represent. With pious reverence do I gaze on the countenances of those renowned burghers, who have preceded me in the steady march of existence,—whose sober and temperate blood now meanders through my veins, flowing slower and slower in its feeble conduits, until its current shall soon be stopped forever!

These, I say to myself, are but frail memorials of the mighty men who flourished in the days of the patriarchs; but who, alas, have long since mouldered in that tomb towards which my steps are insensibly and irresistibly hastening! As I pace the darkened chamber and lose myself in melancholy musings, the shadowy images around me almost seem to steal once more into existence,—their counte-

nances to assume the animation of life,—their eyes to pursue me in every movement! Carried away by the delusions of fancy, I almost imagine myself surrounded by the shades of the departed, and holding sweet converse with the worthies of antiquity! Ah, hapless Diedrich! born in a degenerate age, abandoned to the buffetings of fortune,—a stranger and a weary pilgrim in thy native land,—blest with no weeping wife, nor family of helpless children, but doomed to wander neglected through those crowded streets, and elbowed by foreign upstarts from those fair abodes where once thine ancestors held sovereign empire!

Let me not, however, lose the historian in the man, nor suffer the doting recollections of age to overcome me, while dwelling with fond garrulity on the virtuous days of the patriarchs,—on those sweet days of simplicity and ease, which never more will dawn on the lovely island of Manna-hata.

These melancholy reflections have been forced from me by the growing wealth and importance of New Amsterdam, which, I plainly perceive, are to involve it in all kinds of perils and disasters. Already, as I observed at the close of my last book, they had awakened the attentions of the mother-country. The usual mark of protection shown by mother-countries

to wealthy colonies was forthwith manifested; a governor being sent out to rule over the province, and squeeze out of it as much revenue as possible. The arrival of a governor of course put an end to the protectorate of Oloffe the Dreamer. He appears, however, to have dreamt to some purpose during his sway, as we find him afterwards living as a patroon on the great landed estate on the banks of the Hudson; having virtually forfeited all right to his ancient appellation of Kortlandt or Lackland.

It was in the year of our Lord 1629, that Mynheer Wouter Van Twiller was appointed governor of the province of Nieuw Nederlandts under the commission and control of their High Mightinesses the Lords States-General of the United Netherlands, and the privileged West India Company.

This renowned old gentleman arrived at New Amsterdam in the merry month of June, the sweetest month in all the year; when dan Apollo seems to dance up the transparent firmament,—when the robin, the thrush, and a thousand other wanton songsters, make the woods to resound with amorous ditties, and the luxurious little boblincon revels among the clover-blossoms of the meadows,—all which happy coincidence persuaded the old dames of New Amsterdam, who were skilled in the art

of foretelling events, that this was to be a happy and prosperous administration.

The renowned Wouter (or Walter) Van Twiller was descended from a long line of Dutch burgomasters, who had successively dozed away their lives and grown fat upon the bench of magistracy in Rotterdam; and who had comported themselves with such singular wisdom and propriety, that they were never either heard or talked of—which, next to being universally applauded, should be the object of ambition of all magistrates and rulers. There are two opposite ways by which some men make a figure in the world: one, by talking faster than they think, and the other, by holding their tongues and not thinking at all. By the first, many a smatterer acquires the reputation of a man of quick parts; by the other, many a dunderpate, like the owl, the stupidest of birds, comes to be considered the very type of wisdom. This, by the way, is a casual remark, which I would not, for the universe, have it thought I apply to Governor Van Twiller. It is true he was a man shut up within himself, like an oyster, and rarely spoke, except in monosyllables; but then it was allowed he seldom said a foolish thing. So invincible was his gravity that he was never known to laugh or even to smile through the

whole course of a long and prosperous life. Nay, if a joke were uttered in his presence, that set light-minded hearers in a roar, it was observed to throw him into a state of perplexity. Sometimes he would deign to inquire into the matter, and when, after much explanation, the joke was made as plain as a pike-staff, he would continue to smoke his pipe in silence, and at length, knocking out the ashes, would exclaim, "Well! I see nothing in all that to laugh about."

With all his reflective habits, he never made up his mind on a subject. His adherents accounted for this by the astonishing magnitude of his ideas. He conceived every subject on so grand a scale that he had not room in his head to turn it over and examine both sides of it. Certain it is, that, if any matter were propounded to him on which ordinary mortals would rashly determine at first glance, he would put on a vague, mysterious look, shake his capacious head, smoke some time in profound silence, and at length observe, that "he had his doubts about the matter"; which gained him the reputation of a man slow of belief and not easily imposed upon. What is more, it gained him a lasting name; for to this habit of the mind has been attributed his surname of Twiller; which is said to be a corruption

of the original Twijfler, or, in plain English, *Doubter*.

The person of this illustrious old gentleman was formed and proportioned, as though it had been moulded by the hands of some cunning Dutch statuary, as a model of majesty and



"SET LIGHT-MINDED HEARERS IN A ROAR."

lordly grandeur. He was exactly five feet six inches in height, and six feet five inches in circumference. His head was a perfect sphere, and of such stupendous dimensions, that Dame Nature, with all her sex's ingenuity, would have been puzzled to construct a neck capable

of supporting it ; wherefore she wisely declined the attempt, and settled it firmly on the top of his backbone, just between the shoulders. His body was oblong and particularly capacious at bottom ; which was wisely ordered by Providence, seeing that he was a man of sedentary habits, and very averse to the idle labor of walking. His legs were short, but sturdy in proportion to the weight they had to sustain ; so that when erect he had not a little the appearance of a beer-barrel on skids. His face, that infallible index of the mind, presented a vast expanse, unfurrowed by any of those lines and angles which disfigure the human countenance with what is termed expression. Two small gray eyes twinkled feebly in the midst, like two stars of lesser magnitude in a hazy firmament, and his full-fed cheeks, which seemed to have taken toll of everything that went into his mouth, were curiously mottled and streaked with dusky red, like a spitzenberg apple.

His habits were as regular as his person. He daily took his four stated meals, appropriating exactly an hour to each ; he smoked and doubted eight hours, and he slept the remaining twelve of the four-and-twenty. Such was the renowned Wouter Van Twiller,—a true philosopher, for his mind was either elevated above,



WOUTER VAN TWILLER.

or tranquilly settled below, the cares and perplexities of this world. He had lived in it for years, without feeling the least curiosity to know whether the sun revolved round it, or it round the sun; and he had watched, for at least half a century, the smoke curling from his pipe to the ceiling, without once troubling his head with any of those numerous theories by which a philosopher would have perplexed his brain, in accounting for its rising above the surrounding atmosphere.

In his council he presided with great state and solemnity. He sat in a huge chair of solid oak, hewn in the celebrated forest of the Hague, fabricated by an experienced timmerman of Amsterdam, and curiously carved about the arms and feet, into exact imitations of gigantic eagle's claws. Instead of a sceptre, he swayed a long Turkish pipe, wrought with jasmin and amber, which had been presented to a stadtholder of Holland at the conclusion of a treaty with one of the petty Barbary powers. In this stately chair would he sit, and this magnificent pipe would he smoke, shaking his right knee with a constant motion, and fixing his eye for hours together upon a little print of Amsterdam, which hung in a black frame against the opposite wall of the council-chamber. Nay, it has even been said, that when any delibera-

tion of extraordinary length and intricacy was on the carpet, the renowned Wouter would shut his eyes for full two hours at a time, that he might not be disturbed by external objects; and at such times the internal commotion of his mind was evinced by certain regular guttural sounds, which his admirers declared were merely the noise of conflict, made by his contending doubts and opinions.

It is with infinite difficulty I have been enabled to collect these biographical anecdotes of the great man under consideration. The facts respecting him were so scattered and vague, and divers of them so questionable in point of authenticity, that I have had to give up the search after many, and decline the admission of still more, which would have tended to heighten the coloring of his portrait.

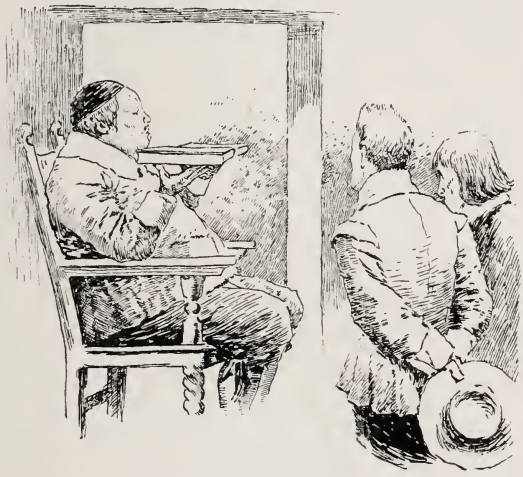
I have been the more anxious to delineate fully the person and habits of Wouter Van Twiller, from the consideration that he was not only the first, but also the best governor that ever presided over this ancient and respectable province; and so tranquil and benevolent was his reign, that I do not find throughout the whole of it a single instance of any offender being brought to punishment,—a most indubitable sign of a merciful governor, and a case unparalleled, excepting in the reign of the

illustrious King Log, from whom, it is hinted, the renowned Van Twiller was a lineal descendant.

The very outset of the career of this excellent magistrate was distinguished by an example of legal acumen, that gave flattering presage of a wise and equitable administration. The morning after he had been installed in office, and, at the moment that he was making his breakfast from a prodigious earthen dish, filled with milk and Indian pudding, he was interrupted by the appearance of Wandle Schoonhoven, a very important old burgher of New Amsterdam, who complained bitterly of one Barent Bleecker, inasmuch as he refused to come to a settlement of accounts, seeing that there was a heavy balance in favor of the said Wandle. Governor Van Twiller, as I have already observed, was a man of few words; he was likewise a mortal enemy to multiplying writings—or being disturbed at his breakfast. Having listened attentively to the statement of Wandle Schoonhoven, giving an occasional grunt, as he shovelled a spoonful of Indian pudding into his mouth,—either as a sign that he relished the dish, or comprehended the story,—he called unto him his constable, and pulling out of his breeches-pocket a huge jack-knife, despatched it after the defendant as a

summons, accompanied by his tobacco-box as a warrant.

This summary process was as effectual in those simple days as was the seal-ring of the great Haroun-al-Raschid among the true



THE JUDGMENT OF WOUTER VAN TWILLER.

believers. The two parties being confronted before him, each produced a book of accounts, written in a language and character that would have puzzled any but a High-Dutch commentator, or a learned decipherer of Egyptian obelisks. The sage Wouter took them one

after the other, and having poised them in his hands, and attentively counted over the number of leaves, fell straightway into a very great doubt, and smoked for half an hour without saying a word; at length laying his finger beside his nose, and shutting his eyes for a moment, with the air of a man who has just caught a subtle idea by the tail, he slowly took his pipe from his mouth, puffed forth a column of tobacco-smoke, and with marvellous gravity and solemnity pronounced, that, having carefully counted over the leaves and weighed the books, it was found, that one was just as thick and as heavy as the other: therefore, it was the final opinion of the court that the accounts were equally balanced: therefore, Wandle should give Barent a receipt, and Barent should give Wandle a receipt, and the constable should pay the costs.

The decision, being straightway made known, diffused general joy throughout New Amsterdam, for the people immediately perceived that they had a very wise and equitable magistrate to rule over them. But its happiest effect was, that not another lawsuit took place throughout the whole of his administration; and the office of constable fell into such decay that there was not one of those losel scouts known in the province for many years. I am the more par-

ticular in dwelling on this transaction, not only because I deem it one of the most sage and righteous judgments on record, and well worthy the attention of modern magistrates, but because it was a miraculous event in the history of the renowned Wouter—being the only time he was ever known to come to a decision in the whole course of his life.



Chapter III.

CONTAINING SOME ACCOUNT OF THE GRAND COUNCIL OF NEW AMSTERDAM, AS ALSO DIVERS ESPECIAL GOOD PHILOSOPHICAL REASONS WHY AN ALDERMAN SHOULD BE FAT—WITH OTHER PARTICULARS TOUCHING THE STATE OF THE PROVINCE.



IN treating of the early governors of the province, I must caution my readers against confounding them, in point of dignity and power, with those worthy gentlemen who are whimsically denominated governors in this enlightened republic,—a set of unhappy victims of popularity, who are, in fact, the most dependent, henpecked beings in the community; doomed to bear the secret goadings and corrections of their own party, and the sneers and revilings of the whole world beside; set up, like geese at Christmas holidays, to be pelted and shot at

by every whipster and vagabond in the land. On the contrary, the Dutch governors enjoyed that uncontrolled authority vested in all commanders of distant colonies or territories. They were, in a manner, absolute despots in their little domains, lording it, if so disposed, over both law and gospel, and accountable to none but the mother-country; which it is well known is astonishingly deaf to all complaints against its governors, provided they discharge the main duty of their station—squeezing out a good revenue. This hint will be of importance, to prevent my readers from being seized with doubt and incredulity, whenever, in the course of this authentic history, they encounter the uncommon circumstance of a governor acting with independence, and in opposition to the opinions of the multitude.

To assist the doubtful Wouter in the arduous business of legislation, a board of magistrates was appointed, which presided immediately over the police. This potent body consisted of a schout or bailiff, with powers between those of the present mayor and sheriff; five burgermeesters, who were equivalent to aldermen; and five schepens, who officiated as scrubs, subdevils, or bottle-holders to the burgermeesters, in the same manner as do assistant aldermen to their principals at the present

day,—it being their duty to fill the pipes of the lordly burgermeesters, hunt the markets for delicacies for corporation dinners, and to discharge such other little offices of kindness as were occasionally required. It was, moreover, tacitly understood, though not specifically enjoined, that they should consider themselves as butts for the blunt wits of the burgermeesters, and should laugh most heartily at all their jokes; but this last was a duty as rarely called in action in those days as it is at present, and was shortly remitted, in consequence of the tragical death of a fat little schepen, who actually died of suffocation in an unsuccessful effort to force a laugh at one of burgermeester Van Zandt's best jokes.

In return for these humble services, they were permitted to say *yes* and *no* at the council-board, and to have that enviable privilege, the run of the public kitchen,—being graciously permitted to eat, and drink, and smoke, at all those snug junketings and public gormandizings for which the ancient magistrates were equally famous with their modern successors. The post of schepen, therefore, like that of assistant alderman, was eagerly coveted by all your burghers of a certain description, who have a hugh relish for good feeding, and an humble ambition to be great men in a small

way,—who thirst after a little brief authority, that shall render them the terror of the almshouse and the bridewell,—that shall enable them to lord it over obsequious poverty, vagrant vice, outcast prostitution, and hunger-driven dishonesty,—that shall give to their beck a houndlike pack of catchpolls and bumbailiffs—tenfold greater rogues than the culprits they hunt down! My readers will



THE FIVE BURGERMEESTERS.

excuse this sudden warmth, which I confess is unbecoming of a grave historian,—but I have a mortal antipathy to catchpolls, bumbailiffs, and little-great men.

The ancient magistrates of this city corresponded with those of the present time no less in form, magnitude, and intellect, than in prerogative and privilege. The burgomasters, like our aldermen, were generally chosen by

weight,—and not only the weight of the body, but likewise the weight of the head. It is a maxim practically observed in all honest, plain-thinking, regular cities, that an alderman should be fat,—and the wisdom of this can be proved to a certainty. That the body is in some measure an image of the mind, or rather that the mind is moulded to the body, like melted lead to the clay in which it is cast, has been insisted on by many philosophers, who have made human nature their peculiar study; for, as a learned gentleman of our own city observes, "there is a constant relation between the moral character of all intelligent creatures and their physical constitution, between their habits and the structure of their bodies." Thus we see that a lean, spare, diminutive body is generally accompanied by a petulant, restless, meddling mind: either the mind wears down the body, by its continual motion, or else the body, not affording the mind sufficient house-room, keeps it continually in a state of fretfulness, tossing and worrying about from the uneasiness of its situation. Whereas your round, sleek, fat, unwieldy periphery is ever attended by a mind like itself, tranquil, torpid, and at ease; and we may always observe, that your well-fed, robustious burghers are in general very tenacious of their

ease and comfort, being great enemies to noise, discord, and disturbance,—and surely none are more likely to study the public tranquillity than those who are so careful of their own. Who ever hears of fat men heading a riot, or herd-



WELL-FED AND ROBUSTIOUS BURGHER.

ing together in turbulent mobs?—no—no; it is your lean, hungry men who are continually worrying society, and setting the whole community by the ears.

The divine Plato, whose doctrines are not

sufficiently attended to by philosophers of the present age, allows to every man three souls: one, immortal and rational, seated in the brain, that it may overlook and regulate the body; a second, consisting of the surly and irascible passions which, like belligerent powers, lie encamped around the heart; a third, mortal and sensual, destitute of reason, gross and brutal in its propensities, and enchained in the belly, that it may not disturb the divine soul by its ravenous howlings. Now, according to this excellent theory, what can be more clear than that your fat alderman is most likely to have the most regular and well-conditioned mind. His head is like a huge spherical chamber, containing a prodigious mass of soft brains, whereon the rational soul lies softly and snugly couched, as on a feather-bed; and the eyes, which are the windows of the bed-chamber, are usually half closed, that its slumberings may not be disturbed by external objects. A mind thus comfortably lodged, and protected from disturbance, is manifestly most likely to perform its functions with regularity and ease. By dint of good feeding, moreover, the mortal and malignant soul, which is confined in the belly, and which, by its raging and roaring, puts the irritable soul in the neighborhood of the heart in an intoler-

able passion, and thus renders men crusty and quarrelsome when hungry, is completely pacified, silenced, and put to rest,—whereupon a host of honest, good-fellow qualities and kind-hearted affections, which had lain perdue, slyly peeping out of the loop-holes of the heart, finding this cerberus asleep, do pluck up their spirits, turn out one and all in their holiday suits, and gambol up and down the diaphragm, —disposing their possessor to laughter, good-humor, and a thousand friendly offices towards his fellow-mortals.

As a board of magistrates, formed on this principle, think but very little, they are the less likely to differ and wrangle about favorite opinions ; and as they generally transact business upon a hearty dinner, they are naturally disposed to be lenient and indulgent in the administration of their duties. Charlemagne was conscious of this, and therefore ordered in his cartularies, that no judge should hold a court of justice, except in the morning, on an empty stomach ;—a pitiful rule, which I can never forgive, and which I warrant bore hard upon all the poor culprits in the kingdom. The more enlightened and humane generation of the present day have taken an opposite course, and have so managed that the aldermen are the best-fed men in the community ; feast-

ing lustily on the fat things of the land, and gorging so heartily on oysters and turtles, that in process of time they acquire the activity of the one, and the form, the waddle, and the green fat of the other. The consequence is, as I have just said, these luxurious feastings do produce such a dulcet equanimity and repose of the soul, rational and irrational, that their transactions are proverbial for unvarying monotony; and the profound laws which they enact in their dozing moments, amid the labors of digestion, are quietly suffered to remain as dead letters, and never enforced, when awake. In a word, your fair, round-bellied burgomaster, like a full-fed mastiff, dozes quietly at the house-door, always at home, and always at hand to watch over its safety; but as to electing a lean, meddling candidate to the office, as has now and then been done, I would as lief put a greyhound to watch the house, or a race-horse to draw an ox-wagon.

The burgomasters, then, as I have already mentioned, were wisely chosen by weight, and the schepens, or assistant aldermen, were appointed to attend upon them and help them eat; but the latter, in the course of time, when they had been fed and fattened into sufficient bulk of body and drowsiness of brain, became very eligible candidates for the burgomasters'

chairs, having fairly eaten themselves into office, as a mouse eats his way into a comfortable lodgment in a goodly, blue-nosed, skimmed-milk, New-England cheese.

Nothing could equal the profound deliberations that took place between the renowned Wouter and these his worthy compeers, unless it be the sage divans of some of our modern corporations. They would sit for hours, smoking and dozing over public affairs, without speaking a word to interrupt that perfect stillness so necessary to deep reflection. Under the sober sway of Wouter Van Twiller and these his worthy coadjutors, the infant settlement waxed vigorous apace, gradually emerging from the swamps and forests, and exhibiting that mingled appearance of town and country, customary in new cities, and which at this day may be witnessed in the city of Washington,—that immense metropolis, which makes so glorious an appearance on paper.

It was a pleasing sight, in those times, to behold the honest burgher, like a patriarch of yore, seated on the bench at the door of his white-washed house, under the shade of some gigantic sycamore or overhanging willow. Here would he smoke his pipe of a sultry afternoon, enjoying the soft southern breeze, and listening with silent gratulation to the clucking of his

hens, the cackling of his geese, and the sonorous grunting of his swine,—that combination of farm-yard melody which may truly be said to have a silver sound, inasmuch as it conveys a certain assurance of profitable marketing.

The modern spectator, who wanders through the streets of this populous city, can scarcely form an idea of the different appearance they presented in the primitive days of the Doubter. The busy hum of multitudes, the shouts of revelry, the rumbling equipages of fashion, the rattling of accursed carts, and all the spirit-grieving sounds of brawling commerce, were unknown in the settlement of New Amsterdam. The grass grew quietly in the highways; the bleating sheep and frolicsome calves sported about the verdant ridge, where now the Broadway loungers take their morning stroll; the cunning fox or ravenous wolf skulked in the woods, where now are to be seen the dens of Gomez and his righteous fraternity of money-brokers; and flocks of vociferous geese cackled about the fields where now the great Tammany wigwam and the patriotic tavern of Martling echo with the wranglings of the mob.

In these good times did a true and enviable equality of rank and property prevail, equally removed from the arrogance of wealth, and the servility and heart-burnings of repining pov-



"HERE WOULD HE SMOKE HIS PIPE OF A SULTRY AFTERNOON."

erty ; and, what in my mind is still more conducive to tranquillity and harmony among friends, a happy equality of intellect was likewise to be seen. The minds of the good burghers of New Amsterdam seemed all to have been cast in one mould, and to be those honest, blunt minds, which, like certain manufactures, are made by the gross, and considered as exceedingly good for common use.

Thus it happens that your true dull minds are generally preferred for public employ, and especially promoted to city honors ; your keen intellects, like razors, being considered too sharp for common service. I know that it is common to rail at the unequal distribution of riches, as the great source of jealousies, broils, and heart-breakings ; whereas, for my part, I verily believe it is the sad inequality of intellect that prevails, that embroils communities more than anything else ; and I have remarked that your knowing people, who are so much wiser than anybody else, are eternally keeping society in a ferment. Happily for New Amsterdam, nothing of the kind was known within its walls ; the very words of learning, education, taste, and talents were unheard of ; a bright genius was an animal unknown, and a blue-stocking lady would have been regarded with as much wonder as a horned

frog or a fiery dragon. No man, in fact, seemed to know more than his neighbor, nor any man to know more than an honest man ought to know, who has nobody's business to mind but his own; the parson and the council clerk



"THE GOOD ST. NICHOLAS."

were the only men that could read in that community, and the sage Van Twiller always signed his name with a cross.

Thrice happy and ever to be envied little Burgh! existing in all the security of harmless insignificance,—unnoticed and unenvied by the

world, without ambition, without vainglory, without riches, without learning, and all their train of carking cares;—and as of yore, in the better days of man, the deities were wont to visit him on earth and bless his rural habitations, so, we are told, in the sylvan days of New Amsterdam, the good St. Nicholas would often make his appearance in his beloved city, of a holiday afternoon, riding jollily among the tree-tops, or over the roofs of the houses, now and then drawing forth magnificent presents from his breeches-pockets, and dropping them down the chimneys of his favorites. Whereas, in these degenerate days of iron and brass, he never shows us the light of his countenance, nor ever visits us, save one night in the year, when he rattles down the chimneys of the descendants of patriarchs, confining his presents merely to the children, in token of the degeneracy of the parents.

Such are the comfortable and thriving effects of a fat government. The province of the New Netherlands, destitute of wealth, possessed a sweet tranquillity that wealth could never purchase. There were neither public commotions, nor private quarrels; neither parties, nor sects, nor schisms; neither persecutions, nor trials, nor punishments; nor were there counsellors, attorneys, catchpolls, or hangmen. Every

man attended to what little business he was lucky enough to have, or neglected it if he pleased, without asking the opinion of his neighbor. In those days nobody meddled with concerns above his comprehension; nor thrust his nose into other people's affairs; nor neglected to correct his own conduct, and reform his own character, in his zeal to pull to pieces the characters of others; but, in a word, every respectable citizen ate when he was not hungry, drank when he was not thirsty, and went regularly to bed when the sun set and the fowls went to roost, whether he was sleepy or not; all which tended so remarkably to the population of the settlement, that I am told every dutiful wife throughout New Amsterdam made a point of enriching her husband with at least one child a year and very often a brace,—this superabundance of good things clearly constituting the true luxury of life, according to the favorite Dutch maxim, that "more than enough constitutes a feast." Everything, therefore, went on exactly as it should do, and in the usual words employed by historians to express the welfare of a country, "the profoundest *tranquillity* and *repose* reigned throughout the province."

Chapter III.

HOW THE TOWN OF NEW AMSTERDAM AROSE OUT OF MUD, AND CAME TO BE MARVELLOUSLY POLISHED AND POLITE—TOGETHER WITH A PICTURE OF THE MANNERS OF OUR GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHERS.



MANIFOLD are the tastes and dispositions of the enlightened *literati*, who turn over the pages of history. Some there be whose hearts are brimful of the yeast of courage, and whose bosoms do work, and swell, and foam, with untried valor, like a barrel of new cider, or a train-band captain, fresh from under the hands of his tailor. This doughty class of readers can be satisfied with nothing but bloody battles, and horrible encounters ; they must be continually storming forts, sacking cities, springing mines, marching up to the muzzles of cannon, charging bayonet through every page, and revelling in gunpowder and

carnage. Others, who are of a less martial, but equally ardent imagination, and who, withal, are a little given to the marvellous, will dwell with wondrous satisfaction on descriptions of prodigies, unheard-of events, hair-breadth escapes, hardy adventures, and all those astonishing narrations which just amble along the boundary line of possibility. A third class, who, not to speak slightly of them, are of a lighter turn, and skim over the records of past times, as they do over the edifying pages of a novel, merely for relaxation and innocent amusement, do singularly delight in treasons, executions, Sabine rapes, Tarquin outrages, conflagrations, murders, and all the other catalogue of hideous crimes, which, like cayenne in cookery, do give a pungency and flavor to the dull detail of history. While a fourth class, of more philosophic habits, do diligently pore over the musty chronicles of time, to investigate the operations of the human kind, and watch the gradual changes in men and manners, effected by the progress of knowledge, the vicissitudes of events, or the influence of situation.

If the three first classes find but little wherewithal to solace themselves in the tranquil reign of Wouter Van Twiller, I entreat them to exert their patience for a while, and bear with

the tedious picture of happiness, prosperity, and peace, which my duty as a faithful historian obliges me to draw; and I promise them, that, as soon as I can possibly alight on anything horrible, uncommon, or impossible, it shall go hard, but I will make it afford them entertainment. This being premised, I turn with great complacency to the fourth class of my readers, who are men, or, if possible, women after my own heart; grave, philosophical, and investigating; fond of analyzing characters, of taking a start from first causes, and so hunting a nation down, through all the mazes of innovation and improvement. Such will naturally be anxious to witness the first development of the newly-hatched colony, and the primitive manners and customs prevalent among its inhabitants, during the halcyon reign of Van Twiller, or the Doubter.

I will not grieve their patience, however, by describing minutely the increase and improvement of New Amsterdam. Their own imaginations will doubtless present to them the good burghers, like so many painstaking and persevering beavers, slowly and surely pursuing their labors: they will behold the prosperous transformation from the rude log hut to the stately Dutch mansion, with brick front, glazed windows, and tiled roof; from the tangled thicket

to the luxuriant cabbage-garden ; and from the skulking Indian to the ponderous burgomaster. In a word, they will picture to themselves the steady, silent, and undeviating march of prosperity, incident to a city destitute of pride or ambition, cherished by a fat government, and whose citizens do nothing in a hurry.

The sage council, as has been mentioned in a preceding chapter, not being able to determine upon any plan for the building of their city,—the cows, in a laudable fit of patriotism, took it under their peculiar charge, and, as they went to and from pasture, established paths through the bushes, on each side of which the good folks built their houses,—which is one cause of the rambling and picturesque turns and labyrinths which distinguish certain streets of New York at this very day.

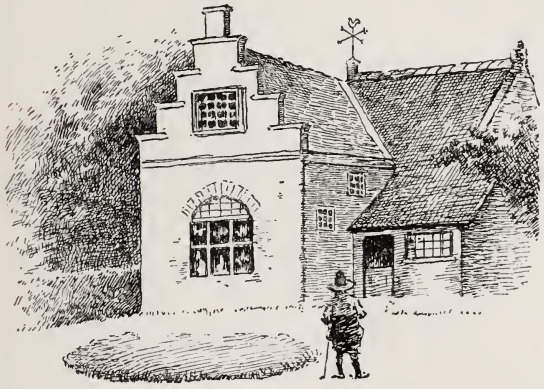
The houses of the higher class were generally constructed of wood, excepting the gable end which was of small black and yellow Dutch bricks, and always faced on the street, as our ancestors, like their descendants, were very much given to outward show, and were noted for putting the best leg foremost. The house was always furnished with abundance of large doors and small windows on every floor, the date of its erection was curiously

designated by iron figures on the front, and on the top of the roof was perched a fierce little weathercock, to let the family into the important secret which way the wind blew.

These, like the weathercocks on the tops of our steeples, pointed so many different ways, that every man could have a wind to his mind; —the most stanch and loyal citizens, however, always went according to the weathercock on the top of the governor's house, which was certainly the most correct, as he had a trusty servant employed every morning to climb up and set it to the right quarter.

In those good days of simplicity and sunshine, a passion for cleanliness was the leading principle in domestic economy, and the universal test of an able housewife,—a character which formed the utmost ambition of our unenlightened grandmothers. The front-door was never opened, except on marriages, funerals, New-Year's days, the festival of St. Nicholas, or some such great occasion. It was ornamented with a gorgeous brass knocker, curiously wrought, sometimes in the device of a dog, and sometimes of a lion's head, and was daily burnished with such religious zeal, that it was oftimes worn out by the very precautions taken for its preservation. The whole house was constantly in a state of inundation, under the

discipline of mops and brooms and scrubbing-brushes; and the good housewives of those days were a kind of amphibious animal, delighting exceedingly to be dabbling in water, —insomuch that an historian of the day gravely tells us, that many of his townswomen grew to have webbed fingers like unto a duck; and



A COUNTRY MANSION.

some of them, he had little doubt, could the matter be examined into, would be found to have the tails of mermaids,—but this I look upon to be a mere sport of fancy, or, what is worse, a wilful misrepresentation.

The grand parlor was the sanctum sanctorum, where the passion for cleaning was

indulged without control. In this sacred apartment no one was permitted to enter, excepting the mistress and her confidential maid, who visited it once a week, for the purpose of giving it a thorough cleaning, and putting things to rights,—always taking the precaution of leaving their shoes at the door, and entering devoutly on their stocking-feet. After scrubbing the floor, sprinkling it with fine white sand, which was curiously stroked into angles and curves and rhomboids with a broom,—after washing the windows, rubbing and polishing the furniture, and putting a new bunch of evergreens in the fireplace,—the window-shutters were again closed to keep out the flies, and the room carefully locked up until the revolution of time brought round the weekly cleaning-day.

As to the family, they always entered in at the gate, and most generally lived in the kitchen. To have seen a numerous household assembled round the fire, one would have imagined that he was transported back to those happy days of primeval simplicity, which float before our imaginations like golden visions. The fireplaces were of a truly patriarchal magnitude, where the whole family, old and young, master and servant, black and white, nay, even the very cat and dog, enjoyed a com-

munity of privilege, and had each a right to a corner. Here the old burgher would sit in perfect silence, puffing his pipe, looking in the fire with half-shut eyes, and thinking of nothing for hours together ; the goede vrouw, on the opposite side, would employ herself diligently in spinning yarn, or knitting stockings. The



"SOME OLD CRONE OF A NEGRO."

young folks would crowd around the hearth, listening with breathless attention to some old crone of a negro, who was the oracle of the family, and who, perched like a raven in a corner of the chimney, would croak forth for a long winter afternoon a string of incredible stories about New-England witches,—grisly

ghosts, horses without heads,—and hair-breadth escapes, and bloody encounters among the Indians.

In those happy days a well-regulated family always rose with the dawn, dined at eleven, and went to bed at sunset. Dinner was invariably a private meal, and the fat old burghers showed incontestable signs of disapprobation and uneasiness at being surprised by a visit from a neighbor on such occasions. But though our worthy ancestors were singularly averse to giving dinners, yet they kept up the social bands of intimacy by occasional banquetings, called tea-parties.

These fashionable parties were generally confined to the higher classes, or noblesse, that is to say, such as kept their own cows, and drove their own wagons. The company commonly assembled at three o'clock, and went away about six, unless it was in winter-time, when the fashionable hours were a little earlier, that the ladies might get home before dark. The tea-table was crowned with a huge earthen dish, well stored with slices of fat pork, fried brown, cut up into morsels, and swimming in gravy. The company being seated round the genial board, and each furnished with a fork, evinced their dexterity in launching at the fattest pieces in this mighty

dish,—in much the same manner as sailors harpoon porpoises at sea, or our Indians spear salmon in the lakes. Sometimes the table was graced with immense apple-pies, or saucers full of preserved peaches and pears; but it was always sure to boast an enormous dish of balls of sweetened dough, fried in hog's fat, and called doughnuts, or olykoeks,—a delicious kind of cake, at present scarce known in this city, except in genuine Dutch families.

The tea was served out of a majestic Delft tea-pot, ornamented with paintings of fat little Dutch shepherds and shepherdesses tending pigs, with boats sailing in the air, and houses built in the clouds, and sundry other ingenious Dutch fantasies. The beaux distinguished themselves by their adroitness in replenishing this pot from a huge copper tea-kettle, which would have made the pigmy macaronies of these degenerate days sweat merely to look at it. To sweeten the beverage, a lump of sugar was laid beside each cup, and the company alternately nibbled and sipped with great decorum, until an improvement was introduced by a shrewd and economic old lady, which was to suspend a large lump directly over the tea-table, by a string from the ceiling, so that it could be swung from mouth to mouth,—an ingenious expedient, which is still kept up by

some families in Albany, but which prevails without exception in Communipaw, Bergen, Flatbush, and all our uncontaminated Dutch villages.

At these primitive tea-parties the utmost propriety and dignity of deportment prevailed. No flirting nor coquetting,—no gambling of old ladies, nor hoyden chattering and romping of young ones,—no self-satisfied struttings of wealthy gentlemen, with their brains in their pockets, nor amusing conceits and monkey divertisements of smart young gentlemen, with no brains at all. On the contrary, the young ladies seated themselves demurely in their rush-bottom chairs, and knit their own woollen stockings; nor ever opened their lips excepting to say *yah Mynheer*, or, *yah ya Vrouw*, to any question that was asked them; behaving in all things like decent, well-educated damsels. As to the gentlemen, each of them tranquilly smoked his pipe, and seemed lost in contemplation of the blue and white tiles with which the fireplaces were decorated; wherein sundry passages of Scripture were piously portrayed: Tobit and his dog figured to great advantage; Haman swung conspicuously on his gibbet; and Jonah appeared most manfully bouncing out of the whale, like Harlequin through a barrel of fire.

The parties broke up without noise and without confusion. They were carried home by their own carriages, that is to say, by the vehicles nature had provided them, excepting



"TOOK LEAVE OF THEM WITH A HEARTY SMACK AT THE DOOR."

such of the wealthy as could afford to keep a wagon. The gentlemen gallantly attended their fair ones to their respective abodes, and took leave of them with a hearty smack at the

door : which, as it was an established piece of etiquette, done in perfect simplicity and honesty of heart, occasioned no scandal at that time, nor should it at the present ;—if our great-grandfathers approved of the custom, it would argue a great want of deference in their descendants to say a word against it.



Chapter IV.

CONTAINING FURTHER PARTICULARS OF THE GOLDEN AGE, AND WHAT CONSTITUTED A FINE LADY AND GENTLEMAN IN THE DAYS OF WALTER THE DOUBTER.



IN this dulcet period of my history, when the beauteous island of Mannahata presented a scene, the very counterpart of those glowing pictures drawn of the golden reign of Saturn, there was, as I have before observed, a happy ignorance, an honest simplicity prevalent among its inhabitants, which, were I even able to depict, would be but little understood by the degenerate age for which I am doomed to write. Even the female sex, those arch innovators upon the tranquillity, the honesty, and gray-beard customs of society, seemed for a while to conduct themselves with incredible sobriety and comeliness.

Their hair, untortured by the abominations of art, was scrupulously pomatumed back from their foreheads with a candle, and covered with a little cap of quilted calico, which fitted exactly to their heads. Their petticoats of linsey-woolsey were striped with a variety of gorgeous dyes,—though I must confess these gallant garments were rather short, scarce reaching below the knee; but then they made up in the number, which generally equalled that of the gentleman's small-clothes; and what is still more praiseworthy, they were all of their own manufacture,—of which circumstance, as may well be supposed, they were not a little vain.

These were the honest days in which every woman staid at home, read the Bible, and wore pockets,—ay, and that too of a goodly size, fashioned with patchwork into many curious devices, and ostentatiously worn on the outside. These, in fact, were convenient receptacles, where all good housewives carefully stored away such things as they wished to have at hand; by which means they often came to be incredibly crammed; and I remember there was a story current, when I was a boy, that the lady of Wouter Van Twiller once had occasion to empty her right pocket in search of a wooden ladle, when the contents

filled a couple of corn-baskets, and the utensil was discovered lying among some rubbish in one corner ;—but we must not give too much faith to all these stories, the anecdotes of those remote periods being very subject to exaggeration.

Besides these notable pockets, they likewise wore scissors and pin-cushions suspended from their girdles by red ribands, or, among the more opulent and showy classes, by brass, and even silver chains,—indubitable tokens of thrifty housewives and industrious spinsters. I cannot say much in vindication of the shortness of the petticoats ; it doubtless was introduced for the purpose of giving the stockings a chance to be seen, which were generally of blue worsted, with magnificent red clocks,—or, perhaps, to display a well-turned ankle, and a neat, though serviceable foot, set off by a high-heeled leathern shoe, with a large and splendid silver buckle. Thus we find that the gentle sex in all ages have shown the same disposition to infringe a little upon the laws of decorum, in order to betray a lurking beauty, or gratify an innocent love of finery.

From the sketch here given, it will be seen that our good grandmothers differed considerably in their ideas of a fine figure from their scantily dressed descendants of the present day.

A fine lady, in those times, waddled under more clothes, even on a fair summer's day, than would have clad the whole bevy of a modern ball-room. Nor were they the less admired by the gentlemen in consequence thereof. On the contrary, the greatness of a lover's passion seemed to increase in proportion to the magnitude of its object,—and a voluminous damsel, arrayed in a dozen of petticoats, was declared by a Low-Dutch sonneteer of the province to be radiant as a sunflower, and luxuriant as a full-blown cabbage. Certain it is, that in those days the heart of a lover could not contain more than one lady at a time; whereas the heart of a modern gallant has often room enough to accommodate half a dozen. The reason of which I conclude to be, that either the hearts of the gentlemen have grown larger, or the persons of the ladies smaller: this, however, is a question for physiologists to determine.

But there was a secret charm in these petticoats, which, no doubt, entered into the consideration of the prudent gallants. The wardrobe of a lady was in those days her only fortune; and she who had a good stock of petticoats and stockings was as absolutely an heiress as is a Kamtchatka damsel with a store of bear-skins, or a Lapland belle with a plenty of reindeer.



"A VOLUMINOUS DAMSEL, ARRAYED IN A DOZEN OF PETTICOATS."

The ladies, therefore, were very anxious to display these powerful attractions to the greatest advantage ; and the best rooms in the house, instead of being adorned with caricatures of Dame Nature, in water-colors and needle-work, were always hung round with abundance of homespun garments, the manufacture and the property of the females,—a piece of laudable ostentation that still prevails among the heiresses of our Dutch villages.

The gentlemen, in fact, who figured in the circles of the gay world in these ancient times, corresponded, in most particulars, with the beauteous damsels whose smiles they were ambitious to deserve. True it is, their merits would make but a very inconsiderable impression upon the heart of a modern fair : they neither drove their curricles, nor sported their tandems, for as yet those gaudy vehicles were not even dreamt of; neither did they distinguish themselves by their brilliancy at the table, and their consequent rencontres with watchmen, for our forefathers were of too pacific a disposition to need those guardians of the night, every soul throughout the town being sound asleep before nine o'clock. Neither did they establish their claims to gentility at the expense of their tailors, for as yet those offenders against the pockets of society, and the tranquillity of all

aspiring young gentlemen, were unknown in New Amsterdam ; every good housewife made the clothes of her husband and family, and even the goede vrouw of Van Twiller himself thought it no disparagement to cut out her husband's linsey-woolsey galligaskins.

Not but what there were some two or three youngsters who manifested the first dawning of what is called fire and spirit ; who held all labor in contempt ; skulked about docks and market-places ; loitered in the sunshine ; squandered what little money they could procure at hustlecap and chuck-farthing ; swore, boxed, fought cocks, and raced their neighbors' horses ; in short, who promised to be the wonder, the talk, and abomination of the town, had not their stylish career been unfortunately cut short by an affair of honor with a whipping-post.

Far other, however, was the truly fashionable gentleman of those days : his dress, which served for both morning and evening, street and drawing-room, was a linsey-woolsey coat, made, perhaps, by the fair hands of the mistress of his affections, and gallantly bedecked with abundance of large brass buttons ; half a score of breeches heightened the proportions of his figure ; his shoes were decorated by enormous copper buckles ; a low-

crowned broad-rimmed hat overshadowed his burly visage ; and his hair dangled down his back in a prodigious queue of eel-skin.

Thus equipped, he would manfully sally forth, with pipe in mouth, to besiege some fair damsel's obdurate heart,—not such a pipe, good reader, as that which Acis did sweetly tune in praise of his Galatea, but one of true Delft manufacture, and furnished with a charge of fragrant tobacco. With this would he resolutely set himself down before the fortress, and rarely failed, in the process of time, to smoke the fair enemy into a surrender, upon honorable terms.

Such was the happy reign of Wouter Van Twiller, celebrated in many a long-forgotten song as the real golden age, the rest being nothing but counterfeit copper-washed coin. In that delightful period, a sweet and holy calm reigned over the whole province. The burgomaster smoked his pipe in peace ; the substantial solace of his domestic cares, after her daily toils were done, sat soberly at the door, with her arms crossed over her apron of snowy white, without being insulted with ribald street-walkers or vagabond boys,—those unlucky urchins who do so infest our streets, displaying, under the roses of youth, the thorns and briers of iniquity. Then it was

that the lover with ten breeches, and the damsel with petticoats of half a score, indulged in all the innocent endearments of virtuous love, without fear and without reproach; for what had that virtue to fear, which was defended



THE YOUNG GALLANT.

by a shield of good linsey-woolseys, equal at least to the seven bull-hides of the invincible Ajax?

Ah, blissful and never-to-be-forgotten age! when everything was better than it has ever been since, or ever will be again,—when Buttermilk Channel was quite dry at low water,—

when the shad in the Hudson were all salmon,—and when the moon shone with a pure and resplendent whiteness, instead of that melancholy yellow light which is the consequence of her sickening at the abominations she every night witnesses in this degenerate city!

Happy would it have been for New Amsterdam could it always have existed in this state of blissful ignorance and lowly simplicity; but, alas! the days of childhood are too sweet to last! Cities, like men, grow out of them in time, and are doomed alike to grow into the bustle, the cares, and miseries of the world. Let no man congratulate himself, when he beholds the child of his bosom or the city of his birth increasing in magnitude and importance,—let the history of his own life teach him the dangers of the one, and this excellent little history of Manna-hata convince him of the calamities of the other.



Chapter V.

ON THE FOUNDING OF FORT AURANIA—OF THE MYSTERIES OF THE HUDSON—OF THE ARRIVAL OF THE PATROON KILLIAN VAN RENSELLAER; HIS LORDLY DESCENT UPON THE EARTH, AND HIS INTRODUCTION OF CLUB-LAW.



IT has already been mentioned, that, in the early times of Oloffe the Dreamer, a frontier-post, or trading-house, called Fort Aurania, had been established on the upper waters of the Hudson, precisely on the site of the present venerable city of Albany; which was at that time considered at the very end of the habitable world. It was, indeed, a remote possession, with which, for a long time, New Amsterdam held but little intercourse. Now and then the "Company's Yacht," as it was called, was sent to the fort with supplies, and

to bring away the peltries which had been purchased of the Indians. It was like an expedition to the Indias, or the North Pole, and always made great talk in the settlement. Sometimes an adventurous burgher would accompany the expedition, to the great uneasiness of his friends; but, on his return, had so many stories to tell of storms and tempests on the Tappaan Zee, of hobgoblins in the Highlands and at the Devil's Dans Kammer, and of all the other wonders and perils with which the river abounded in those early days, that he deterred the less adventurous inhabitants from following his example.

Matters were in this state, when, one day, as Walter the Doubter and his burgermeesters were smoking and pondering over the affairs of the province, they were roused by the report of a cannon. Sallying forth, they beheld a strange vessel at anchor in the bay. It was unquestionably of Dutch build, broad-bottomed and high-pooped, and bore the flag of their High Mightinesses at the mast-head.

After a while, a boat put off for land, and a stranger stepped on shore,—a lofty, lordly kind of man, tall, and dry, with a meagre face, furnished with huge moustaches. He was clad in Flemish doublet and hose, and an insufferably tall hat, with a cocktail feather. Such



KILLIAN VAN RENSELLAER.

was the patroon Killian Van Rensellaer, who had come out from Holland to found a colony or patroonship on a great tract of wild land, granted to him by their High Mightinesses the Lords States-General, in the upper regions of the Hudson.

Killian Van Rensellaer was a nine days' wonder in New Amsterdam; for he carried a high head, looked down upon the portly, short-legged burgomasters, and owned no allegiance to the governor himself; boasting that he held his patroonship directly from the Lords States-General.

He tarried but a short time in New Amsterdam, merely to beat up recruits for his colony. Few, however, ventured to enlist for those remote and savage regions; and when they embarked, their friends took leave of them as if they should never see them more, and stood gazing with tearful eye as the stout, round-sterned little vessel ploughed and splashed its way up the Hudson, with great noise and little progress, taking nearly a day to get out of sight of the city.

And now, from time to time, floated down tidings to the Manhattoes of the growing importance of this new colony. Every account represented Killian Van Rensellaer as rising in importance and becoming a mighty patroon

in the land. He had received more recruits from Holland. His patroonship of Rensellaerwick lay immediately below Fort Aurania, and extended for several miles on each side of the Hudson, beside embracing the mountainous region of the Helderberg. Over all this he claimed to hold separate jurisdiction, independent of the colonial authorities of New Amsterdam.

All these assumptions of authority were duly reported to Governor Van Twiller and his council, by despatches from Fort Aurania; at each new report the governor and his counsellors looked at each other, raised their eyebrows, gave an extra puff or two of smoke, and then relapsed into their usual tranquillity.

At length tidings came that the patroon of Rensellaerwick had extended his usurpations along the river, beyond the limits granted him by their High Mightinesses; and that he had even seized upon a rocky island in the Hudson, commonly known by the name of Bearn or Bear's Island, where he was erecting a fortress, to be called by the lordly name of Rensellaerstein.

Wouter Van Twiller was roused by this intelligence. After consulting with his burgomasters, he despatched a letter to the patroon of Rensellaerwick, demanding by what right

he had seized upon this island, which lay beyond the bounds of his patroonship. The answer of Killian Van Rensellaer was in his own lordly style, "*By wapen recht!*"—that is to say, by the right of arms, or, in common parlance, by club-law. This answer plunged the worthy Wouter in one of the deepest doubts he had in the whole course of his administration ; in the meantime, while Wouter doubted, the lordly Killian went on to finish his fortress of Rensellaerstein, about which I foresee I shall have something to record in a future chapter of this most eventful history.



Chapter VII.

IN WHICH THE READER IS BEGUILED INTO A DELECTABLE WALK, WHICH ENDS VERY DIFFERENTLY FROM WHAT IT COMMENCED.



IN the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and four, on a fine afternoon in the glowing month of September, I took my customary walk upon the Battery, which is at once the pride and bulwark of this ancient and impregnable city of New York. The ground on which I trod was hallowed by recollections of the past; and as I slowly wandered through the long alley of poplars, which, like so many birch brooms standing on end, diffused a melancholy and lugubrious shade, my imagination drew a contrast between the surrounding scenery and what it was in the classic days of our fore-

fathers. Where the government house by name, but the custom-house by occupation, proudly reared its brick walls and wooden pillars, there whilom stood the low, but substantial, red-tiled mansion of the renowned Wouter Van Twiller. Around it the mighty bulwarks of Fort Amsterdam frowned defiance to every absent foe; but, like many a whiskered warrior and gallant militia captain, confirmed their martial deeds to frowns alone. The mud breastworks had long been levelled with the earth, and their site converted into the green lawns and leafy alleys of the Battery; where the gay apprentice sported his Sunday coat, and the laborious mechanic, relieved from the dirt and drudgery of the week, poured his weekly tale of love into the half-averted ear of the sentimental chambermaid. The capacious bay still presented the same expansive sheet of water, studded with islands, sprinkled with fishing-boats, and bounded by shores of picturesque beauty. But the dark forests which once clothed those shores had been violated by the savage hand of cultivation, and their tangled mazes, and impenetrable thickets, had degenerated into teeming orchards and waving fields of grain. Even Governor's Island, once a smiling garden, appertaining to the sovereigns of the province, was now

covered with fortifications, inclosing a tremendous block-house, so that this once peaceful island resembled a fierce little warrior in a big cocked hat, breathing gun-powder and defiance to the world!

For some time did I indulge in a pensive train of thought; contrasting, in sober sadness,



THE BATTERY.

the present day with the hallowed years behind the mountains; lamenting the melancholy progress of improvement, and praising the zeal with which our worthy burghers endeavored to preserve the wrecks of venerable customs, prejudices, and errors from the overwhelming tide of modern innovation,—when, by degrees, my ideas took a different turn, and I insensibly

awakened to an enjoyment of the beauties around me.

It was one of those rich autumnal days which heaven particularly bestows upon the beauteous island of Manna-hata and its vicinity —not a floating cloud obscured the azure firmament,—the sun, rolling in glorious splendor through his ethereal course, seemed to expand his honest Dutch countenance into an unusual expression of benevolence, as he smiled his evening salutation upon a city which he delights to visit with his most bounteous beams,—the very winds seemed to hold in their breaths in mute attention, lest they should ruffle the tranquillity of the hour,—and the waveless bosom of the bay presented a polished mirror, in which nature beheld herself and smiled. The standard of our city, reserved like a choice handkerchief, for days of gala, hung motionless on the flag-staff, which forms the handle of a gigantic churn ; and even the tremulous leaves of the poplar and the aspen ceased to vibrate to the breath of heaven. Everything seemed to acquiesce in the profound repose of nature. The formidable eighteen-pounders slept in the embrasures of the wooden batteries, seemingly gathering fresh strength to fight the battles of their country on the next fourth of July ; the solitary drum on Governor's Island

forgot to call the garrison to their *shovels ;* the evening gun had not yet sounded its signal for all the regular well meaning poultry throughout the country to go to roost ; and the fleet of canoes, at anchor between Gibbet Island and Communipaw, slumbered on their rakes, and suffered the innocent oysters to lie for a while unmolested in the soft mud of their native banks ! My own feelings sympathized with the contagious tranquillity, and I should infallibly have dozed upon one of those fragments of benches, which our benevolent magistrates have provided for the benefit of convalescent loungers, had not the extraordinary inconvenience of the couch set all repose at defiance.

In the midst of this slumber of the soul, my attention was attracted to a black speck, peering above the western horizon, just in the rear of Bergen steeple : gradually it augments and overhangs the would-be cities of Jersey, Harsimus, and Hoboken, which, like three jockeys, are starting on the course of existence, and jostling each other at the commencement of the race. Now it skirts the long shore of ancient Pavonia, spreading its wide shadows from the high settlements of Weehawk quite to the lazaretto and quarantine erected by the sagacity of our police, for the embarrassment of commerce ; now it climbs the serene vault

of heaven, cloud rolling over cloud, shrouding the orb of day, darkening the vast expanse, and bearing thunder and hail and tempest in its bosom. The earth seems agitated at the confusion of the heavens; the late waveless mirror is lashed into furious waves that roll in hollow murmurs to the shore; the oyster-boats that erst sported in the placid vicinity of Gibbet Island, now hurry affrighted to the land; the poplar writhes and twists and whistles in the blast; torrents of drenching rain and sounding hail deluge the Battery walks; the gates are thronged by apprentices, servant-maids, and little Frenchmen, with pocket-handkerchiefs over their hats, scampering from the storm; the late beauteous prospect presents one scene of anarchy and wild uproar, as though old Chaos had resumed his reign, and was hurling back into one vast turmoil the conflicting elements of nature.

Whether I fled from the fury of the storm, or remained boldly at my post, as our gallant train-band captains who march their soldiers through the rain without flinching, are points which I leave to the conjecture of the reader. It is possible he may be a little perplexed also to know the reason why I introduced this tremendous tempest to disturb the serenity of my work. On this latter point I will gratui-

tously instruct his ignorance. The panorama view of the Battery was given merely to gratify the reader with a correct description of that celebrated place and the parts adjacent; secondly, the storm was played off, partly to give a little bustle and life to this tranquil part of my work, and to keep my drowsy readers from



"SCAMPERING FROM THE STORM."

falling asleep, and partly to serve as an overture to the tempestuous times which are about to assail the pacific province of Nieuw Nederlandts, and which overhang the slumbrous administration of the renowned Wouter Van Twiller. It is thus the experienced playwright puts all the fiddles, the French-horns, the kettle-drums, and trumpets of his orchestra in

requisition, to usher in one of those horrible and brimestone uproars called Melodrames,—and it is thus he discharges his thunder, his lightning, his rosin, and saltpetre, preparatory to the rising of a ghost or the murdering of a hero. We will now proceed with our history.

Whatever may be advanced by philosophers to the contrary, I am of opinion, that, as to nations, the old maxim, that "honesty is the best policy," is a sheer and ruinous mistake. It might have answered well enough in the honest times when it was made; but in these degenerate days, if a nation pretends to rely merely upon the justice of its dealings, it will fare something like the honest man who fell among thieves, and found his honesty a poor protection against bad company. Such, at least, was the case with the guileless government of the New Netherlands; which, like a worthy unsuspicious old burgher, quietly settled itself down in the city of New Amsterdam, as into a snug elbow-chair, and fell into a comfortable nap, while, in the meantime, its cunning neighbors stepped in and picked its pockets. In a word, we may ascribe the commencement of all the woes of this great province, and its magnificent metropolis, to the tranquil security, or, to speak more accurately, to the unfortunate honesty of its government.

But as I dislike to begin an important part of my history towards the end of a chapter, and as my readers, like myself, must doubtless be exceedingly fatigued with the long walk we have taken, and the tempest we have sustained, I hold it meet we shut up the book, smoke a pipe, and, having thus refreshed our spirits, take a fair start in a new chapter.



Chapter VIII.

FAITHFULLY DESCRIBING THE INGENIOUS PEOPLE OF CONNECTICUT AND THEREABOUTS — SHOWING, MOREOVER, THE TRUE MEANING OF LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE, AND A CURIOUS DEVICE AMONG THESE STURDY BARBARIANS TO KEEP UP A HARMONY OF INTERCOURSE, AND PROMOTE POPULATION.



WHAT my readers may the more fully comprehend the extent of the calamity, at this very moment impending over the honest, unsuspecting province of Nieuw Nederlandts, and its dubious governor, it is necessary that I should give some account of a horde of strange barbarians, bordering upon the eastern frontier.

Now so it came to pass, that, many years previous to the time of which we are treating, the sage cabinet of England had adopted a

certain national creed, a kind of public walk of faith, or rather a religious turnpike, in which every loyal subject was directed to travel to Zion,—taking care to pay the *toll-gatherers* by the way.

Albeit a certain shrewd race of men, being very much given to indulge their own opinions on all manner of subjects (a propensity exceedingly offensive to your free governments of Europe), did most presumptuously dare to think for themselves in matters of religion, exercising what they considered a natural and unextinguishable right—the liberty of conscience.

As, however, they possessed that ingenuous habit of mind which always thinks aloud, which rides cock-a-hoop on the tongue, and is forever galloping into other people's ears, it naturally followed that their liberty of conscience likewise implied *liberty of speech*, which being freely indulged, soon put the country in a hubbub, and aroused the pious indignation of the vigilant fathers of the Church.

The usual methods were adopted to reclaim them, which in those days were considered efficacious in bringing back stray sheep to the fold; that is to say, they were coaxed, they were admonished, they were menaced, they were buffeted,—line upon line, precept upon

precept, lash upon lash, here a little and there a great deal, were exhorted without mercy and without success,—until the worthy pastors of the Church, wearied out by their unparalleled stubbornness, were driven, in the excess of their tender mercy, to adopt the Scripture text, and literally to "heap live embers on their heads."

Nothing, however, could subdue that independence of the tongue which has ever distinguished this singular race, so that, rather than subject that heroic member to further tyranny, they one and all embarked for the wilderness of America, to enjoy, unmolested, the inestimable right of talking. And, in fact, no sooner did they land upon the shore of this free-spoken country, than they all lifted up their voices, and made such a clamor of tongues, that we are told they frightened every bird and beast out of the neighborhood, and struck such mute terror into certain fish, that they have been called *dumb-fish* ever since.

This may appear marvellous, but it is nevertheless true; in proof of which I would observe, that the dumb-fish has ever since become an object of superstitious reverence, and forms the Saturday's dinner of every true Yankee.

The simple aborigines of the land for a while contemplated these strange folk in utter aston-

ishment; but discovering that they wielded harmless though noisy weapons, and were a lively, ingenious, good-humored race of men,



THE YANKEE'S SATURDAY'S DINNER OF DUMB-FISH.

they became very friendly and sociable, and gave them the name of *Yanokies*, which in the Mais-Tchusaeg (or Massachusetts) language

signifies *silent men*,—a waggish appellation, since shortened into the familiar epithet of YANKEES, which they retain unto the present day.

True it is, and my fidelity as an historian will not allow me to pass over the fact, that, having served a regular apprenticeship in the school of persecution, these ingenious people soon showed that they had become masters of the art. The great majority were of one particular mode of thinking in matters of religion; but, to their great surprise and indignation, they found that divers Papists, Quakers, and Anabaptists were springing up among them, and all claiming to use the liberty of speech. This was at once pronounced a daring abuse of the liberty of conscience, which they now insisted was nothing more than the liberty to think as one pleased in matters of religion—provided one thought right; for otherwise it would be giving a latitude to damnable heresies. Now as they, the majority, were convinced that they alone thought right, it consequently followed, that whoever thought different from them thought wrong,—and whoever thought wrong, and obstinately persisted in not being convinced and converted, was a flagrant violator of the inestimable liberty of conscience, and a corrupt and infectious mem-

ber of the body politic, and deserved to be lopped off and cast into the fire. The consequence of all which was a fiery persecution of divers sects, and especially of Quakers.

Now I 'll warrant there are hosts of my readers, ready at once to lift up their hands and eyes, with that virtuous indignation with which we contemplate the faults and errors of our neighbors, and to exclaim at the preposterous idea of convincing the mind by tormenting the body, and establishing the doctrine of charity and forbearance by intolerant persecution. But in simple truth what are we doing at this very day, and in this very enlightened nation, but acting upon the very same principle in our political controversies? Have we not within but a few years released ourselves from the shackles of a government which cruelly denied us the privilege of governing ourselves, and using in full latitude that invaluable member, the tongue? and are we not at this very moment striving our best to tyrannize over the opinions, tie up the tongues, and ruin the fortunes of one another? What are our great political societies, but mere political inquisitions,—our pot-house committees, but little tribunals of denunciation,—our newspapers, but mere whipping-posts and pillories, where unfortunate individuals are pelted with rotten-

eggs,—and our council of appointment, but a grand *auto-da-fé*, where culprits are annually sacrificed for their political heresies?

Where, then, is the difference in principle between our measures and those you are so ready to condemn among the people I am treating of? There is none; the difference is merely circumstantial. Thus we *denounce*, instead of banishing,—we *libel*, instead of scourging,—we *turn out of office*, instead of hanging,—and where they burnt an offender in proper person, we either tar and feather, or *burn him in effigy*, —this political persecution being, somehow or other, the grand palladium of our liberties, and an incontrovertible proof that this is a *free country!*

But notwithstanding the fervent zeal with which this holy war was prosecuted against the whole race of unbelievers, we do not find that the population of this new colony was in any wise hindered thereby; on the contrary, they multiplied to a degree which would be incredible to any man unacquainted with the marvellous fecundity of this growing country.

This amazing increase may, indeed, be partly ascribed to a singular custom prevalent among them, commonly known by the name of *bundling*,—a superstitious rite observed by the young people of both sexes, with which they

usually terminated their festivities, and which was kept up with religious strictness by the more bigoted part of the community. This ceremony was likewise, in those primitive times, considered as an indispensable prelimi-



TARRED AND FEATHERED.

nary to matrimony, their courtships commencing where ours usually finish,—by which means they acquired that intimate acquaintance with each other's good qualities before marriage, which has been pronounced by philosophers the sure basis of a happy union. Thus

early did this cunning and ingenious people display a shrewdness of making a bargain, which has ever since distinguished them,—and a strict adherence to the good old vulgar maxim about "buying a pig in a poke."

To this sagacious custom, therefore, do I chiefly attribute the unparalleled increase of the Yanokie or Yankee race; for it is a certain fact, well authenticated by court records and parish registers, that, wherever the practice of bundling prevailed, there was an amazing number of sturdy brats annually born unto the State, without the licence of the law, or the benefit of clergy. Neither did the irregularity of their birth operate in the least to their disparagement. On the contrary, they grew up a long-sided, raw-boned, hardy race of whoreson whalers, wood-cutters, fisherman, and peddlers, and strapping corn-fed wenches,—who by their united efforts tended marvellously towards peopling those notable tracts of country called Nantucket, Piscataway, and Cape Cod.



Chapter VIII.

HOW THESE SINGULAR BARBARIANS TURNED OUT TO BE NOTORIOUS SQUATTERS—HOW THEY BUILT AIR-CASTLES, AND ATTEMPTED TO INITIATE THE NEDERLANDERS INTO THE MYSTERY OF BUNDLING.



IN the last chapter I have given a faithful and unprejudiced account of the origin of that singular race of people inhabiting the country eastward of the Nieuw Nederlandts; but I have yet to mention certain peculiar habits which rendered them exceedingly annoying to our ever-honored Dutch ancestors.

The most prominent of these was a certain rambling propensity, with which, like the sons of Ishmael, they seem to have been gifted by heaven, and which continually goads them on to shift their residence from place to place, so

that a Yankee farmer is in a constant state of migration, *tarrying* occasionally here and there, clearing lands for other people to enjoy, building houses for others to inhabit, and in a manner may be considered the wandering Arab of America.

His first thought, on coming to years of manhood, is to *settle* himself in the world,—which means nothing more nor less than to begin his rambles. To this end he takes unto himself for a wife some buxom country heiress, passing rich in red ribbons, glass beads, and mock tortoise-shell combs, with a white gown and morocco shoes for Sunday, and deeply skilled in the mystery of making apple-sweetmeats, long sauce, and pumpkin-pie.

Having thus provided himself, like a peddler with a heavy knapsack, wherewith to regale his shoulders through the journey of life, he literally sets out on the peregrination. His whole family, household-furniture, and farming utensils are hoisted into a covered cart, his own and his wife's wardrobe packed up in a firkin,—which done, he shoulders his axe, takes staff in hand, whistles "Yankee Doodle," and trudges off to the woods, as confident of the protection of Providence, and relying as cheerfully upon his own resources, as ever did a patriarch of yore when he journeyed into a

strange country of the Gentiles. Having buried himself in the wilderness, he builds himself a log hut, clears away a corn-field and potato patch, and, Providence smiling upon his labors, is soon surrounded by a snug farm and some half a score of flaxen-headed urchins, who, by their size, seem to have sprung all at once out of the earth, like a crop of toadstools.

But it is not the nature of this most indefatigable of speculators to rest contented with any state of sublunary enjoyment: *improvement* is his darling passion; and having thus improved his lands, the next care is to provide a mansion worthy the residence of a landholder. A huge palace of pine boards immediately springs up in the midst of the wilderness, large enough for a parish church, and furnished with windows of all dimensions, but so rickety and flimsy withal, that every blast gives it a fit of the ague.

By the time the outside of this mighty air-castle is completed, either the funds or the zeal of our adventurer is exhausted, so that he barely manages to furnish one room within, where the whole family burrow together,—while the rest of the house is devoted to the curing of pumpkins, or storing of carrots and potatoes, and is decorated with fanciful festoons

of dried apples and peaches. The outside, remaining unpainted, grows venerably black with time; the family wardrobe is laid under contribution for old hats, petticoats, and breeches, to stuff into the broken windows, while the four winds of heaven keep up a whistling and howling about this aërial palace, and play as many unruly gambols as they did of yore in the cave of old Æolus.

The humble log hut, which whilom nestled this *improving* family snugly within its narrow but comfortable walls, stands hard by, in ignominious contrast, degraded into a cow-house or pig-sty; and the whole scene reminds one forcibly of a fable, which I am surprised has never been recorded, of an aspiring snail, who abandoned his humble habitation, which he had long filled with great respectability, to crawl into the empty shell of a lobster,—where he would no doubt have resided with great style and splendor, the envy and the hate of all the painstaking snails in the neighborhood, had he not perished with cold in one corner of his stupendous mansion.

Being thus completely settled, and, to use his own words, "to rights," one would imagine that he would begin to enjoy the comforts of his situation,—to read newspapers, talk politics, neglect his own business, and attend

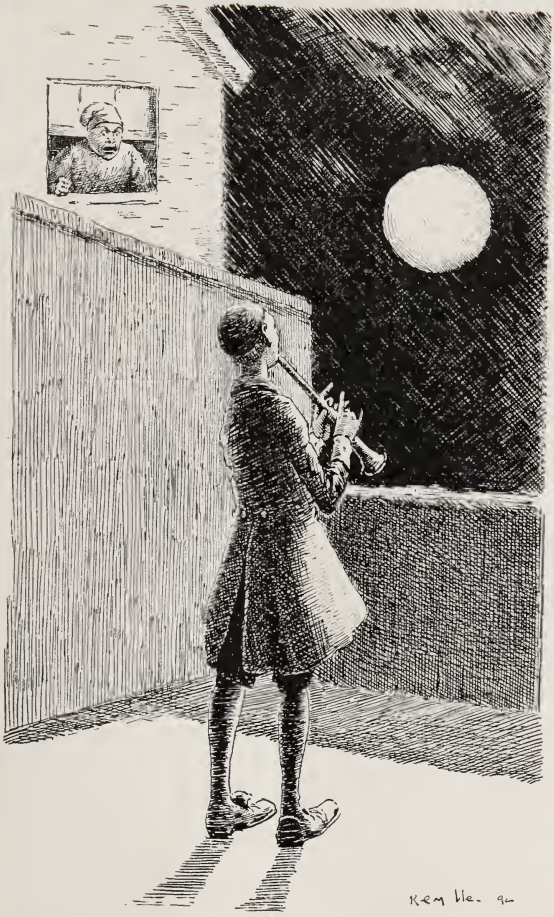
to the affairs of the nation, like a useful and patriotic citizen: but now it is that his wayward disposition begins again to operate. He soon grows tired of a spot where there is no longer any room for improvement,—sells his farm, air-castle, petticoat windows and all, reloads his cart, shoulders his axe, puts himself at the head of his family, and wanders away in search of new lands,—again to fell trees,—again to clear corn-fields,—again to build a shingle palace, and again to sell off and wander. Such were the people of Connecticut, who bordered upon the eastern frontier of New Netherlands; and my readers may easily imagine what uncomfortable neighbors this light-hearted but restless tribe must have been to our tranquil progenitors. If they cannot, I would ask them if they have ever known one of our regular, well-organized Dutch families, whom it hath pleased heaven to afflict with the neighborhood of a French boarding-house? The honest old burgher cannot take his afternoon's pipe on the bench before his door, but he is persecuted with the scraping of fiddles, the chattering of women, and the squalling of children; he cannot sleep at night for the horrible melodies of some amateur, who chooses to serenade the moon, and display his terrible proficiency in *execution*, on the clarionet, haut-

boy, or some other soft-toned instrument; nor can he leave the street-door open, but his house is defiled by the unsavory visits of a troop of pup-dogs, who even sometimes carry their loathsome ravages into the *sanctum sanctorum*, the parlor!

If my readers have ever witnessed the sufferings of such a family, so situated, they may form some idea how our worthy ancestors were distressed by their mercurial neighbors of Connecticut.

Gangs of these marauders, we are told, penetrated into the New Netherland settlements, and threw whole villages into consternation by their unparalleled volubility and their intolerable inquisitiveness,—two evil habits hitherto unknown in those parts, or only known to be abhorred; for our ancestors were noted as being men of truly Spartan taciturnity, and who neither knew nor cared aught about anybody's concerns but their own. Many enormities were committed on the highways, where several unoffending burghers were brought to a stand, and tortured with questions and guesses,—which outrages occasioned as much vexation and heart-burning as does the modern right of search on the high seas.

Great jealousy did they likewise stir up, by their intermeddling and successes among the



"THE HORRIBLE MELODIES OF SOME AMATEUR, WHO CHOOSES TO SERENADE THE MOON."

divine sex; for, being a race of brisk, likely, pleasant-tongued varlets, they soon seduced the light affections of the simple damsels from their ponderous Dutch gallants. Among other hideous customs, they attempted to introduce among them that of *bundling*, which the Dutch lasses of the Nederlandts, with that eager passion for novelty and foreign fashions natural to their sex, seemed very well inclined to follow, but that their mothers, being more experienced in the world, and better acquainted with men and things, strenuously discountenanced all such outlandish innovations.

But what chiefly operated to embroil our ancestors with these strange folk, was an unwarrantable liberty which they occasionally took of entering in hordes into the territories of the New Netherlands, and settling themselves down, without leave or licence, to *improve* the land, in the manner I have before noticed. This unceremonious mode of taking possession of *new land* was technically termed *squatting*, and hence is derived the appellation of *squatters*,—a name odious in the ears of all great land-holders, and which is given to those enterprising worthies who seize upon land first, and take their chance to make good their title to it afterwards.

All these grievances, and many others which

were constantly accumulating, tended to form that dark and portentous cloud, which, as I observed in a former chapter, was slowly gathering over the tranquil province of New Netherlands. The pacific cabinet of Van Twiller, however, as will be perceived in the sequel, bore them all with a magnanimity that

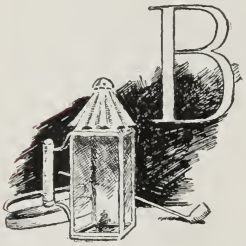


"BRISK, LIKELY, PLEASANT-TONGUED VARLETS."

redounds to their immortal credit, becoming by passive endurance inured to this increasing mass of wrongs,—like that mighty man of old, who, by dint of carrying about a calf from the time it was born, continued to carry it without difficulty when it had grown to be an ox.

Chapter IX.

HOW THE FORT GOED HOOP WAS FEARFULLY BELEAGUERED—HOW THE RENOWNED WOUTER FELL INTO A PROFOUND DOUBT, AND HOW HE FINALLY EVAPORATED.



BY this time my readers must fully perceive what an arduous task I have undertaken,—exploring a little kind of Herculaneum of history, which had lain nearly for ages buried under the rubbish of years, and almost totally forgotten,—raking up the limbs and fragments of disjointed facts, and endeavoring to put them scrupulously together, so as to restore them to their original form and connection,—now lugging forth the character of an almost forgotten hero, like a mutilated statue, now deciphering a half-defaced inscription, and now lighting upon a mouldering manuscript, which, after painful study scarce repays the trouble of perusal.

In such case, how much has the reader to depend upon the honor and probity of his author, lest, like a cunning antiquarian, he either impose upon him some spurious fabrication of his own for a precious relic of antiquity, or else dress up the dismembered fragment with such false trappings, that it is scarcely possible to distinguish the truth from the fiction with which it is enveloped. This is a grievance which I have more than once had to lament, in the course of my wearisome researches among the works of my fellow-historians, who have strangely disguised and distorted the facts respecting this country; and particularly respecting the great province of New Netherlands; as will be perceived by any who will take the trouble to compare their romantic effusions, tricked out in the meretricious gauds of fable, with this authentic history.

I have had more vexations of the kind to encounter, in those parts of my history which treat of the transactions on the eastern border, than in any other, in consequence of the troops of historians who have infested these quarters, and have shown the honest people of Nieuw Nederlandts no mercy in their works. Among the rest, Mr. Benjamin Trumbull arrogantly declares, that "the Dutch were always mere intruders." Now, to this I shall make no

other reply than to proceed in the steady narration of my history, which will contain not only proofs that the Dutch had clear title and possession in the fair valleys of the Connecticut, and that they were wrongfully dispossessed thereof, but likewise, that they have been scandalously maltreated ever since by the misrepresentations of the crafty historians of New England. And in this I shall be guided by a spirit of truth and impartiality, and a regard to immortal fame; for I would not wittingly dishonor my work by a single falsehood, misrepresentation, or prejudice, though it should gain our forefathers the whole country of New England.

I have already noticed, in a former chapter of my history, that the territories of the Nieuw Nederlandts, extended on the east, quite to the Varsche or fresh, or Connecticut River. Here, at an early period, had been established a frontier post on the bank of the river, and called Fort Goed Hoop, not far from the site of the present fair city of Hartford. It was placed under the command of Jacobus Van Curlet, or Curlis, as some historians will have it,—a doughty soldier, of that stomachful class famous for eating all they kill. He was long in the body and short in the limb, as though a tall man's body had been mounted on a little



JACOBUS VAN CURLET.

man's legs. He made up for this turnspit construction by striding to such an extent, that you would have sworn he had on the seven-leagued boots of Jack the Giant-killer; and so high did he tread on parade, that his soldiers were sometimes alarmed lest he should trample himself under foot.

But notwithstanding the erection of this fort, and the appointment of this ugly little man of war as commander, the Yankees continued the interlopings hinted at in my last chapter, and at length had the audacity to *squat* themselves down within the jurisdiction of Fort Goed Hoop.

The long-bodied Van Curlet protested with great spirit against these unwarrantable encroachments, couching his protest in Low Dutch, by way of inspiring more terror, and forthwith despatched a copy of the protest to the governor at New Amsterdam, together with a long and bitter account of the aggressions of the enemy. This done, he ordered his men, one and all, to be of good cheer, shut the gate of the fort, smoked three pipes, went to bed, and awaited the result with a resolute and intrepid tranquillity, that greatly animated his adherents, and no doubt struck sore dismay and affright into the hearts of the enemy.

Now it came to pass, that about this time the renowned Wouter Van Twiller, full of years and honors, and council-dinners, had reached that period of life and faculty which, according to the great Gulliver, entitles a man to admission into the ancient order of Struldbruggs. He employed his time in smoking his Turkish pipe, amid an assemblage of sages, equally enlightened and nearly as venerable as himself, and who, for their silence, their gravity, their wisdom, and their cautious averseness to coming to any conclusion in business, are only to be equalled by certain profound corporations which I have known in my time. Upon reading the protest of the gallant Jacobus Van Curlet, therefore, his excellency fell straightway into one of the deepest doubts that ever he was known to encounter; his capacious head gradually drooped on his chest, he closed his eyes, and inclined his ear to one side, as if listening with great attention to the discussion that was going on in his belly,—and which all who knew him declared to be the huge court-house or council-chamber of his thoughts, forming to his head what the house of representatives does to the Senate. An inarticulate sound, very much resembling a snore, occasionally escaped him; but the nature of this internal cogitation was never known, as he

never opened his lips on the subject to man, woman, or child. In the meantime, the protest of Van Curlet lay quietly on the table, where it served to light the pipes of the venerable sages assembled in council; and in the great smoke which they raised, the gallant Jacobus, his protest, and his mighty Fort Goed Hoop were soon as completely beclouded and forgotten as is a question of emergency swallowed up in the speeches and resolutions of a modern session of Congress.

There are certain emergencies when your profound legislators and sage deliberative councils are mightily in the way of a nation, and when an ounce of hare-brained decision is worth a pound of sage doubt and cautious discussion. Such, at least, was the case at present; for, while the renowned Wouter Van Twiller was daily battling with his doubts, and his resolution growing weaker and weaker in the contest, the enemy pushed farther and farther into his territories, and assumed a most formidable appearance in the neighborhood of Fort Goed Hoop. Here they founded the mighty town of *Pyquag*, or, as it has since been called, *Weathersfield*, a place which, if we may credit the assertions of that worthy historian, John Josselyn, Gent., "hath been infamous by reason of the witches therein." And so daring did

these men of Pyquag become, that they extended those plantations of onions, for which their town is illustrious, under the very noses of the garrison of Fort Goed Hoop, insomuch that the honest Dutchmen could not look toward that quarter without tears in their eyes.



THE PROTEST OF JACOBUS VAN CURLET.

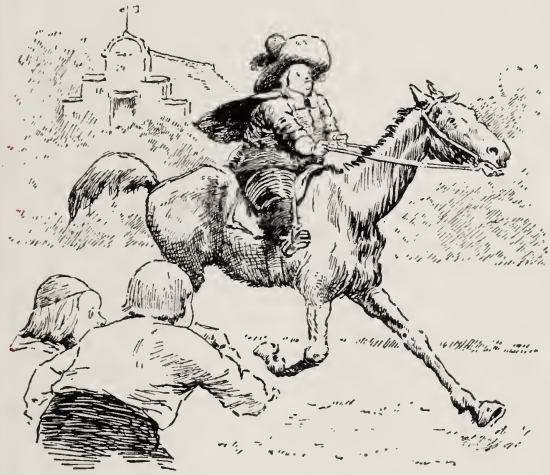
This crying injustice was regarded with proper indignation by the gallant Jacobus Van Curlet. He absolutely trembled with the violence of his choler and the exacerbations of his valor, which were the more turbulent in their workings from the length of the body in which they were agitated. He forthwith proceeded

to strengthen his redoubts, heighten his breast-works, deepen his fosse, and fortify his position with a double row of abatis; after which he despatched a fresh courier with accounts of his perilous situation.

The courier chosen to bear the despatches was a fat, oily little man, as being less liable to be worn out, or to lose leather on the journey; and to insure his speed, he was mounted on the fleetest wagon-horse in the garrison, remarkable for length of limb, largeness of bone, and hardness of trot, and so tall, that the little messenger was obliged to climb on his back by means of his tail and crupper. Such extraordinary speed did he make, that he arrived at Fort Amsterdam in a little less than a month, though the distance was full two hundred pipes, or about one hundred and twenty miles.

With an appearance of great hurry and business, and smoking a short travelling-pipe, he proceeded on a long swing-trot through the muddy lanes of the metropolis, demolishing whole batches of dirt pies, which the little Dutch children were making in the road; and for which kind of pastry the children of this city have ever been famous. On arriving at the governor's house he climbed down from his steed, roused the gray-headed door-keeper, old

Skaats, who, like his lineal descendant and faithful representative, the venerable crier of our court, was nodding at his post, rattled at the door of the council-chamber, and startled the members as they were dozing over a plan for establishing a public market.



"HE PROCEEDED ON A LONG SWING-TROT THROUGH THE MUDDY LANES."

At that very moment a gentle grunt, or rather a deep-drawn snore, was heard from the chair of the governor; a whiff of smoke was at the same instant observed to escape from his lips, and a light cloud to ascend from the bowl

of his pipe. The council, of course, supposed him engaged in deep sleep, for the good of the community, and, according to custom in all such cases established, every man bawled out silence, when, of a sudden, the door flew open, and the little courier straddled into the apartment, cased to the middle in a pair of Hessian boots, which he had got into for the sake of expedition. In his right hand he held forth the ominous despatches, and with his left he grasped firmly the waistband of his galligaskins, which had unfortunately given way in the exertion of descending from his horse. He stumped resolutely up to the governor, and with more hurry than perspicuity delivered his message. But fortunately his ill tidings came too late to ruffle the tranquillity of this most tranquil of rulers. His venerable excellency had just breathed and smoked his last,—his lungs and his pipe having been exhausted together, and his peaceful soul having escaped in the last whiff that curled from his tobacco-pipe. In a word, the renowned Walter the Doubter, who had so often slumbered with his contemporaries, now slept with his fathers, and Wilhelmus Kieft governed in his stead.

Book IV.

CONTAINING THE CHRONICLES OF THE REIGN OF WILLIAM THE TESTY.



Chapter II.

SHOWING THE NATURE OF HISTORY IN GENERAL; CONTAINING FURTHERMORE THE UNIVERSAL ACQUIREMENTS OF WILLIAM THE TESTY, AND HOW A MAN MAY LEARN SO MUCH AS TO RENDER HIMSELF GOOD FOR NOTHING.



WHEN the lofty Thucydides is about to enter upon his description of the plague that desolated Athens, one of his modern commentators assures the reader, that the history is now going to be exceeding solemn, serious, and pathetic, and hints, with that air of chuckling gratulation with which a good dame draws forth a choice morsel from a cupboard to regale a favorite, that this plague will give his history a most agreeable variety.

In like manner did my heart leap within me, when I came to the dolorous dilemma of Fort Goed Hoop, which I at once perceived to be the

forerunner of a series of great events and entertaining disasters. Such are the true subjects for the historic pen. For what is history, in fact, but a kind of Newgate calendar, a register of the crimes and miseries that man has inflicted on his fellowman? It is a huge libel on human nature, to which we industriously add page after page, volume after volume, as if we were building up a monument to the honor, rather than the infamy of our species. If we turn over the pages of these chronicles that man has written of himself, what are the characters dignified by the appellation of great, and held up to the admiration of posterity? Tyrants, robbers, conquerors, renowned only for the magnitude of their misdeeds, and the stupendous wrongs and miseries they have inflicted on mankind,—warriors, who have hired themselves to the trade of blood, not from motives of virtuous patriotism, or to protect the injured and defenceless, but merely to gain the vaunted glory of being adroit and successful in massacring their fellow-beings! What are the great events that constitute a glorious era? —The fall of empires; the desolation of happy countries; splendid cities smoking in their ruins; the proudest works of art tumbled in the dust; the shrieks and groans of whole nations ascending unto heaven!

It is thus the historian may be said to thrive on the miseries of mankind, like birds of prey which hover over the field of battle to fatten on the mighty dead. It was observed by a great projector of inland lock-navigation, that rivers, lakes, and oceans were only formed to



THE POET AND HISTORIAN.

feed canals. In like manner I am tempted to believe that plots, conspiracies, wars, victories, and massacres are ordained by Providence only as food for the historian.

It is a source of great delight to the philosopher, in studying the wonderful economy

of nature, to trace the mutual dependencies of things, how they are created reciprocally for each other, and how the most noxious and apparently unnecessary animal has its uses. Thus those swarms of flies, which are so often execrated as useless vermin, are created for the sustenance of spiders; and spiders, on the other hand, are evidently made to devour flies. So those heroes, who have been such scourges to the world, were bounteously provided as themes for the poet and historian, while the poet and the historian were destined to record the achievements of heroes!

These, and many similar reflections, naturally arose in my mind as I took up my pen to commence the reign of William Kieft: for now the stream of our history, which hitherto has rolled in a tranquil current, is about to depart forever from its peaceful haunts, and brawl through many a turbulent and rugged scene.

As some sleek ox, sunk in the rich repose of a clover-field, dozing and chewing the cud, will bear repeated blows before it raises itself, so the province of Nieuw Nederlandts, having waxed fat under the drowsy reign of the Doubter, needed cuffs and kicks to rouse it into action. The reader will now witness the manner in which a peaceful community advances towards a state of war; which is apt to be like

the approach of a horse to a drum, with much prancing and little progress, and too often with the wrong end foremost.

Wilhelmus Kieft, who in 1634 ascended the gubernatorial chair (to borrow a favorite though clumsy appellation of modern phraseologists), was of a lofty descent, his father being inspector of wind-mills in the ancient town of Saardam; and our hero, we are told, when a boy, made very curious investigations into the nature and operation of these machines, which was one reason why he afterwards came to be so ingenious a governor. His name, according to the most authentic etymologists, was a corruption of Kyver, that is to say, a *wrangler* or *scolder*, and expressed the characteristic of his family, which, for nearly two centuries, had kept the windy town of Saardam in hot water, and produced more tartars and brimstones than any ten families in the place; and so truly did he inherit this family peculiarity, that he had not been a year in the government of the province, before he was universally denominated William the Testy. His appearance answered to his name. He was a brisk, wiry, waspish little old gentleman; such a one as may now and then be seen stumping about our city in a broad-skirted coat with huge buttons, a cocked hat stuck on the back of his head, and a cane

as high as his chin. His face was broad, but his features were sharp; his cheeks were scorched into a dusky red by two fiery little gray eyes; his nose turned up, and the corners of his mouth turned down, pretty much like the muzzle of an irritable pug-dog.

I have heard it observed by a profound adept in human physiology, that if a woman waxes fat with the progress of years, her tenure of life is somewhat precarious, but if haply she withers as she grows old, she lives forever. Such promised to be the case with William the Testy, who grew tough in proportion as he dried. He had withered, in fact, not through the process of years, but through the tropical fervor of his soul, which burnt like a vehement rush-light in his bosom, inciting him to incessant broils and bickerings. Ancient traditions speak much of his learning, and of the gallant inroads he had made into the dead languages, in which he had made captive a host of Greek nouns and Latin verbs, and brought off rich booty in ancient saws and apothegms, which he was wont to parade in his public harangues, as a triumphant general of yore his *spolia opima*. Of metaphysics he knew enough to confound all hearers and himself into the bargain. In logic, he knew the whole family of syllogisms and dilemmas, and was so proud of his skill



WILLIAM THE TESTY.

that he never suffered even a self-evident fact to pass unargued. It was observed, however, that he seldom got into an argument without getting into a perplexity, and then into a passion with his adversary for not being convinced gratis.

He had, moreover, skirmished smartly on the frontiers of several of the sciences, was fond of experimental philosophy, and prided himself upon inventions of all kinds. His abode, which he had fixed at a Bowerie or country-seat at a short distance from the city, just at what is now called Dutch Street, soon abounded with proofs of his ingenuity: patent smoke-jacks that required a horse to work them; Dutch ovens that roasted meat without fire; carts that went before the horses; weather-cocks that turned against the wind; and other wrong-headed contrivances that astonished and confounded all beholders. The house, too, was beset with paralytic cats and dogs, the subjects of his experimental philosophy; and the yelling and yelping of the latter unhappy victims of science, while aiding in the pursuit of knowledge, soon gained for the place the name of "Dog's Misery," by which it continues to be known at the present day.

It is in knowledge as in swimming; he who flounders and splashes on the surface makes

more noise, and attracts more attention, than the pearl-diver who quietly dives in quest of treasures at the bottom. The vast acquirements of the new governor were the theme of marvel among the simple burghers of New Amsterdam; he figured about the place as learned a man as a Bonze at Pekin, who has mastered one half of the Chinese alphabet, and was unanimously pronounced a "universal genius?"

I have known in my time many a genius of this stamp; but, to speak my mind freely, I never knew one who, for the ordinary purposes of life, was worth his weight in straw. In this respect, a little sound judgment and plain common-sense is worth all the sparkling genius that ever wrote poetry or invented theories. Let us see how the universal acquirements of William the Testy aided him in the affairs of government.



Chapter II.

HOW WILLIAM THE TESTY UNDERTOOK TO CONQUER BY PROCLAMATION—HOW HE WAS A GREAT MAN ABROAD, BUT A LITTLE MAN IN HIS OWN HOUSE.



NO sooner had this bustling little potentate been blown by a whiff of fortune into the seat of government than he called his council together to make them a speech on the state of affairs.

Caius Gracchus, it is said, when he harangued the Roman populace, modulated his tone by an oratorical flute or pitch-pipe ; Wilhelmus Kieft, not having such an instrument at hand, availed himself of that musical organ or trump which nature has implanted in the midst of a man's face : in other words, he preluded his address by a sonorous blast of the nose,—a preliminary flourish much in vogue among public orators.

He then commenced by expressing his hum-

ble sense of his utter unworthiness of the high post to which he had been appointed; which made some of the simple burghers wonder why he undertook it, not knowing that it is a point of etiquette with a public orator never to enter upon a public office without declaring himself unworthy to cross the threshold. He then proceeded in a manner highly classic and erudite to speak of government generally, and of the governments of ancient Greece in particular, together with the wars of Rome and Carthage, and the rise and fall of sundry outlandish empires which the worthy burghers had never read nor heard of. Having thus, after the manner of your learned orator, treated things in general, he came, by a natural, roundabout transition, to the matter in hand, namely, the daring aggressions of the Yankees.

As my readers are well aware of the advantage a potentate has in handling his enemies as he pleases in his speeches and bulletins, where he has the talk all on his own side, they may rest assured that William the Testy did not let such an opportunity escape of giving the Yankees what is called "a taste of his quality." In speaking of their inroads into the territories of their High Mightinesses, he compared them to the Gauls who desolated Rome, the Goths and Vandals who overran the fairest plains of

Europe; but when he came to speak of the unparalleled audacity with which they of Weathersfield had advanced their patches up to the very walls of Fort Goed Hoop, and threatened to smother the garrison in onions, tears of rage started into his eyes, as though he nosed the very offence in question.

Having thus wrought up his tale to a climax, he assumed a most belligerent look, and assured the council that he had devised an instrument, potent in its effects, and which he trusted would soon drive the Yankees from the land. So saying, he thrust his hand into one of the deep pockets of his broad-skirted coat and drew forth, not an infernal machine, but an instrument in writing, which he laid with great emphasis upon the table.

The burghers gazed at it for a time in silent awe, as a wary housewife does at a gun, fearful it may go off half-cocked. The document in question had a sinister look, it is true; it was crabbed in text, and from a broad red ribbon dangled the great seal of the province, about the size of a buckwheat pancake. Still, after all, it was but an instrument in writing. Herein, however, existed the wonder of the invention. The document in question was a PROCLAMATION, ordering the Yankees to depart instantly from the territories of their

High Mightinesses, under pain of suffering all the forfeitures and punishments in such a case made and provided. In was on the moral effect of this formidable instrument that Wilhelmus Kieft calculated, pledging his valor as a governor that, once fulminated against the



THE GREAT SEAL OF THE PROVINCE.

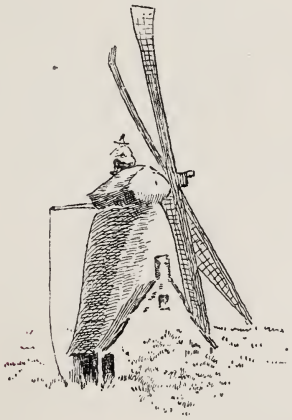
Yankees, it would, in less than two months, drive every mother's son of them across the borders.

The council broke up in perfect wonder; and nothing was talked of for some time among the old men and women of New Amsterdam but the vast genius of the governor, and his new and cheap mode of fighting by proclamation.

As to Wilhelmus Kieft, having despatched his proclamation to the frontiers, he put on his cocked hat and corduroy small-clothes, and mounting a tall raw-boned charger, trotted out to his rural retreat of Dog's Misery. Here, like the good Numa, he reposed from the toils of state, taking lessons in government, not from the nymph Egeria, but from the honored wife of his bosom; who was one of that class of females sent upon the earth a little after the flood, as a punishment for the sins of mankind, and commonly known by the appellation of *knowing women*. In fact, my duty as an historian obliges me to make known a circumstance which was a great secret at the time, and consequently was not a subject of scandal at more than half the tea-tables in New Amsterdam, but which, like many other great secrets, has leaked out in the lapse of years,—and this was, that Wilhelmus the Testy, though one of the most potent little men that ever breathed, yet submitted at home to a species of government, neither laid down in Aristotle nor Plato; in short, it partook of the nature of a pure, unmixed tyranny, and is familiarly denominated *petticoat government*—an absolute sway, which, although exceedingly common in these modern days, was very rare among the ancients, if we may judge from

the rout made about the domestic economy of honest Socrates; which is the only ancient case on record.

The great Kieft, however, warded off all the sneers and sarcasms of his particular friends, who are ever ready to joke with a man on sore points of the kind, by alleging that it was a government of his own election, to which he submitted through choice, adding at the same time a profound maxim which he had found in an ancient author, that "he who would aspire to *govern*, should first learn to *obey*."



Chapter III.

IN WHICH ARE RECORDED THE SAGE PROJECTS OF A RULER OF UNIVERSAL GENIUS — THE ART OF FIGHTING BY PROCLAMATION — AND HOW THAT THE VALIANT JACOBUS VAN CURLET CAME TO BE FOULLY DISHONORED AT FORT GOED HOOP.



NEVER was a more comprehensive, a more expeditious, or, what is still better, a more economical measure devised, than this of defeating the Yankees by proclamation,—an expedient, likewise, so gentle and humane, there were ten chances to one in favor of its succeeding ; but then there was one chance to ten that it would not succeed,—as the ill-natured fates would have it, that single chance carried the day ! The proclamation was perfect in all its parts, well constructed, well written, well sealed, and well published ; all that was wanting to insure its effect was, that the Yankees should stand in

awe of it; but, provoking to relate, they treated it with the most absolute contempt, applied it to an unseemly purpose; and thus did the first warlike proclamation come to a shameful end, —a fate which I am credibly informed has befallen but too many of its successors.



KIDNAPPING HOGS.

So far from abandoning the country, those varlets continued their encroachments, squatting along the green banks of the Varsche River, and founding Hartford, Stamford, New Haven, and other border-towns. I have already shown how the onion patches of Pyquag

were an eye-sore to Jacobus Van Curlet and his garrison ; but now these moss-troopers increased in their atrocities, kidnapping hogs, impounding horses, and sometimes grievously rib-roasting their owners. Our worthy forefathers could scarcely stir abroad without danger of being out-jockeyed in horse-flesh, or taken in in bargaining ; while, in their absence, some daring Yankee peddler would penetrate to their household, and nearly ruin the good housewives with tin ware and wooden bowls.*

I am well aware of the perils which environ me in this part of my history. While raking with curious hand but pious heart, among the mouldering remains of former days, anxious to draw therefrom the honey of wisdom, I may fare somewhat like that valiant worthy, Samson, who, in meddling with the carcass of a

* The following cases in point appear in Hazard's *Collection of State Papers.*

"In the meantime, they of Hartford have not onely usurped and taken in the lands of Connecticott, although unrighteously and against the lawes of nations but have hindered our nation in sowing theire own purchased broken up lands, but have also sowed them with corne in the night, which the Nederlanders had broken up and intended to sowe : and have beaten the servants of the high and mighty the honored companie, which were laboring upon theire master's lands, from theire lands, with sticks and

dead lion, drew a swarm of bees about his ears. Thus, while narrating the many misdeeds of the Yanokie or Yankee race, it is ten chances to one but I offend the morbid sensibilities of certain of their unreasonable descendants, who may fly out and raise such a buzzing about this unlucky head of mine, that I shall need the tough hide of an Achilles, or an Orlando Furioso, to protect me from their stings.

Should such be the case, I should deeply and sincerely lament,—not my misfortune in giving offence, but the wrong-headed perverseness of an ill-natured generation, in taking offence at anything I say. That their ancestors did use my ancestors ill is true, and I am very sorry for it. I would, with all my heart, the fact were otherwise; but as I am recording the sacred events of history, I 'd not

plow staves in hostile manner laming, and among the rest, struck Ever Duckings [Evert Duyckink] a hole in his head, with a stick, so that the bloode ran downe very strongly downe upon his body."

"Those of Hartford sold a hogg, that belonged to the honored companie, under pretence that he had eaten of theire grounde grass, when they had not any foot of inheritance. They proffered the hogg for 5*s*. if the commissioners would have given 5*s*. for damage; which the commissioners denied, because noe man's own hogg (as men used to say) can trespass upon his owne master's grounde."

bate one nail's breadth of the honest truth, though I were sure the whole edition of my work would be bought up and burnt by the common hangman of Connecticut. And in sooth, now that these testy gentlemen have drawn me out, I will make bold to go further, and observe that this is one of the grand purposes for which we impartial historians are sent into the world, to redress wrongs and render justice on the heads of the guilty. So that, though a powerful nation may wrong its neighbors with temporary impunity, yet sooner or later an historian springs up, who wreaks ample chastisement on it in return.

Thus these moss-troopers of the east little thought, I'll warrant it, while they were harassing the inoffensive province of Nieuw Nederlandts, and driving its unhappy governor to his wit's end, that an historian would ever arise, and give them their own, with interest. Since, then, I am but performing my bounden duty as an historian, in avenging the wrongs of our revered ancestors, I shall make no further apology; and, indeed, when it is considered that I have all these ancient borderers of the east in my power, and at the mercy of my pen, I trust that it will be admitted I conduct myself with great humanity and moderation.

It was long before William the Testy could be persuaded that his much-vaunted war-measure was ineffectual; on the contrary, he flew in a passion whenever it was doubted, swearing that, though slow in operation, yet when it once began to work, it would soon purge the land of these invaders. When convinced, at length, of the truth, like a shrewd physician he attributed the failure to the quantity, not the quality of the medicine, and resolved to double the dose. He fulminated, therefore, a second proclamation, more vehement than the first, forbidding all intercourse with these Yankee intruders, ordering the Dutch burghers on the frontiers to buy none of their pacing horses, measly pork, apple-sweetmeats, Weathersfield onions, or wooden bowls, and to furnish them with no supplies of gin, gingerbread, or sourkrout.

Another interval elapsed, during which the last proclamation was as little regarded as the first; and the non-intercourse was especially set at naught by the young folks of both sexes, if we may judge by the active bundling which took place along the borders.

At length, one day the inhabitants of New Amsterdam were aroused by a furious barking of dogs, great and small, and beheld, to their surprise, the whole garrison of Fort Goed

Hoop straggling into town all tattered and wayworn, with Jacobus Van Curlet at their head, bringing the melancholy intelligence of the capture of Fort Goed Hoop by the Yankees.

The fate of this important fortress is an impressive warning to all military commanders. It was neither carried by storm nor famine; nor was it undermined; nor bombarded; nor set on fire by red-hot shot; but was taken by a stratagem no less singular than effectual, and which can never fail of success, whenever an opportunity occurs of putting it in practice.

It seems that the Yankees had received intelligence that the garrison of Jacobus Van Curlet had been reduced nearly one eighth by the death of two of his most corpulent soldiers, who had overeaten themselves on fat salmon caught in the Varsche River. A secret expedition was immediately set on foot to surprise the fortress. The crafty enemy, knowing the habits of the garrison to sleep soundly after they had eaten their dinners and smoked their pipes, stole upon them at the noontide of a sultry summer's day, and surprised them in the midst of their slumbers.

In an instant the flag of their High Mightinesses was lowered, and the Yankee standard



"THE WHOLE GARRISON OF FORT GOED HOOP STRAGGLING INTO TOWN ALL TATTERED AND WAYWORN."

elevated in its stead, being a dried codfish, by way of a spread eagle. A strong garrison was appointed, of long-sided, hard-fisted Yankees, with Weathersfield onions for cockades and feathers. As to Jacobus Van Curlet and his men, they were seized by the nape of the neck, conducted to the gate, and one by one dismissed by a kick in the crupper, as Charles XII. dismissed the heavy-bottomed Russians at the battle of Narva; Jacobus Van Curlet receiving two kicks in consideration of his official dignity.



Chapter IV.

CONTAINING THE FEARFUL WRATH OF WILLIAM THE TESTY, AND THE ALARM OF NEW AMSTERDAM—HOW THE GOVERNOR DID STRONGLY FORTIFY THE CITY—OF THE RISE OF ANTONY THE TRUMPETER, AND THE WINDY ADDITION TO THE ARMORIAL BEARINGS OF NEW AMSTERDAM.



LANGUAGE cannot express the awful ire of William the Testy on hearing of the catastrophe at Fort Goed Hoop. For three good hours his rage was too great for words, or rather the words were too great for him (being a very small man), and he was nearly choked by the misshapen, nine-cornered Dutch oaths and epithets which crowded at once into his gullet. At length his words found vent, and for three days he kept up a constant discharge, anathematizing the Yankees, man, woman, and child, for a set of dieven, schobbejacken, deugenieten,

twistzoekeren, blaes-kaken, loosen-schalken, kakken-bedden, and a thousand other names, of which, unfortunately for posterity, history does not mention. Finally, he swore that he would have nothing more to do with such a squatting, bundling, guessing, questioning, swapping, pumpkin-eating, molasses-daubing, shingle-splitting, cider-watering, horse-jockeying, notion-peddling crew; that they might stay at Fort Goed Hoop and rot, before he would dirty his hands by attempting to drive them away: in proof of which he ordered the new-raised troops to be marched forthwith into winter-quarters, although it was not as yet quite midsummer. Great despondency now fell upon the city of New Amsterdam. It was feared that the conquerors of Fort Goed Hoop, flushed with victory and apple-brandy, might march on to the capital, take it by storm, and annex the whole province to Connecticut. The name of Yankee became as terrible among the Nieuw Nederlanders as was that of Gaul among the ancient Romans; insomuch that the good wives of the Manhattoes used it as a bugbear wherewith to frighten their unruly children.

Everybody clamored around the governor, imploring him to put the city in a complete posture of defence; and he listened to their clamors. Nobody could accuse William the

Testy of being idle in time of danger, or at any other time. He was never idle, but then he was often busy to very little purpose. When a youngling, he had been impressed with the words of Solomon, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard, observe her ways and be wise"; in conformity to which he had ever been of a restless, ant-like turn, hurrying hither and thither, nobody knew why or wherefore, busying himself about small matters with an air of great importance and anxiety, and toiling at a grain of mustard-seed in the full conviction that he was moving a mountain. In the present instance, he called in all his inventive powers to his aid, and was continually pondering over plans, making diagrams, and worrying about with a troop of workmen and projectors at his heels. At length, after a world of consultation and contrivance, his plans of defence ended in rearing a great flag-staff in the centre of the fort, and perching a wind-mill on each bastion.

These warlike preparations in some measure allayed the public alarm, especially after an additional means of securing the safety of the city had been suggested by the governor's lady. It has already been hinted in this most authentic history, that in the domestic establishment of William the Testy "the gray mare was the better horse"; in other words, that

his wife "ruled the roast," and in governing the governor, governed the province, which might thus be said to be under petticoat government.

Now it came to pass, that about this time there lived in Manhattoes a jolly, robustious trumpeter, named Antony Van Corlear, famous for his long wind; and who, as the story goes, could twang so potently upon his instrument, that the effect upon all within hearing was like that ascribed to the Scotch bagpipe when it sings right lustily i' the nose.

This sounder of brass was moreover a lusty bachelor, with a pleasant, burly visage, a long nose, and huge whiskers. He had his little *bowerie*, or retreat, in the country, where he led a roistering life, giving dances to the wives and daughters of the burghers of the Manhattoes, insomuch that he became a prodigious favorite with all the women, young and old. He is said to have been the first to collect that famous toll levied on the fair sex at Kissing Bridge, on the highway to Hellgate.*

To this sturdy bachelor the eyes of all the

*The bridge here mentioned by Mr. Knickerbocker still exists; but it is said that the toll is seldom collected nowadays, excepting on sleighing parties, by the descendants of the patriarchs, who still preserve the traditions of the city.

women were turned in this time of darkness and peril, as the very man to second and carry out the plans of defence of the governor. A kind of petticoat council was forthwith held at the government house, at which the governor's lady presided; and this lady, as has been hinted, being all potent with the governor, the result of these councils was the elevation of Antony the Trumpeter to the post of commandant of wind-mills and champion of New Amsterdam.

The city being thus fortified and garrisoned, it would have done one's heart good to see the governor snapping his fingers and fidgeting with delight, as the trumpeter strutted up and down the ramparts, twanging defiance to the whole Yankee race, as does a modern editor to all the principalities and powers on the other side of the Atlantic. In the hands of Antony Van Corlear this windy instrument appeared to him as potent as the horn of the paladin Astolpho, or even the more classic horn of Alecto; nay, he had almost the temerity to compare it with the rams' horns celebrated in Holy Writ, at the very sound of which the walls of Jericho fell down.

Be all this as it may, the apprehensions of hostilities from the east gradually died away. The Yankees made no further invasion; nay,

they declared that they had only taken possession of Fort Goed Hoop as being erected within their territories. So far from manifesting hostility, they continued to throng to New Amsterdam with the most innocent countenances imaginable, filling the market with their notions, being as ready to trade with the Nederlanders as ever, and not a whit more prone to get to the windward of them in a bargain.

The old wives of the Manhattoes, who took tea with the governor's lady, attributed all this affected moderation to the awe inspired by the military preparations of the governor, and the windy prowess of Antony the Trumpeter.

There were not wanting illiberal minds, however, who sneered at the governor for thinking to defend his city as he governed it, by mere wind; but William Kieft was not to be jeered out of his wind-mills: he had seen them perched upon the ramparts of his native city of Saardam, and was persuaded they were connected with the great science of defence; nay, so much piqued was he by having them made a matter of ridicule, that he introduced them into the arms of the city, where they remain to this day, quartered with the ancient beaver of the Manhattoes, an emblem and memento of his policy.



ANTONY THE TRUMPETER.

I must not omit to mention that certain wise old burghers of the Manhattoes, skilful in expounding signs and mysteries, after events have come to pass, consider this early intrusion of the wind-mill into the escutcheon of our city, which before had been wholly occupied by the beaver, as portentous of its after fortune, when the quiet Dutchman would be elbowed aside by the enterprising Yankee, and patient industry overtopped by windy speculation.



Chapter V.

ON THE JURISPRUDENCE OF WILLIAM THE TESTY, AND HIS ADMIRABLE EXPEDIENTS FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF POVERTY.



AMONG the wrecks and fragments of exalted wisdom, which have floated down the stream of time from venerable antiquity, and been picked up by those humble but industrious wights who ply along the shores of literature, we find a shrewd ordinance of Charondas the Locrian legislator. Anxious to preserve the judicial code of the State from the additions and amendments of country members and seekers of popularity, he ordained that, whoever proposed a new law, should do it with a halter about his neck ; whereby, in case his proposition were rejected, they just hung him up—and there the matter ended.

The effect was, that for more than two hundred years there was but one trifling alteration in the judicial code; and legal matters were so clear and simple that the whole race of lawyers starved to death for want of employment. The Locrians, too, being freed from all incitement to litigation, lived very lovingly together, and were so happy a people that they make scarce any figure in history; it being only your litigious, quarrelsome, rantipole nations who make much noise in the world.

I have been reminded of these historical facts in coming to treat of the internal policy of William the Testy. Well would it have been for him had he in the course of his universal acquirements stumbled upon the precaution of the good Charondas, or had he looked nearer home at the protectorate of Oloffe the Dreamer, when the community was governed without laws. Such legislation, however, was not suited to the busy, meddling mind of William the Testy. On the contrary, he conceived that the true wisdom of legislation consisted in the multiplicity of laws. He accordingly had great punishments for great crimes, and little punishments for little offences. By degrees the whole surface of society was cut up by ditches and fences, and quickset hedges of the law, and even the sequestered paths of private life so

beset by petty rules and ordinances, too numerous to be remembered, that one could scarce walk at large without the risk of letting off a spring-gun or falling into a man-trap.

In a little while the blessings of innumerable laws became apparent; a class of men arose to expound and confound them. Petty courts were instituted to take cognizance of petty offences, pettifoggers began to abound; and the community was soon set together by the ears.

Let me not be thought as intending anything derogatory to the profession of the law, or to the distinguished members of that illustrious order. Well am I aware that we have in this ancient city innumerable worthy gentlemen, the knights-errant of modern days, who go about redressing wrongs and defending the defenceless, not for the love of filthy lucre, nor the selfish cravings of renown, but merely for the pleasure of doing good. Sooner would I throw this trusty pen into the flames, and cork up my ink-bottle forever, than infringe even for a nail's breadth upon the dignity of these truly benevolent champions of the distressed. On the contrary, I allude merely to those caitiff scouts who, in these latter days of evil, infest the skirts of the profession, as did the recreant Cornish knights of yore the honorable order of

chivalry,—who, under its auspices, commit flagrant wrongs,—who thrive by quibbles, by quirks and chicanery, and like vermin increase the corruption in which they are engendered.

Nothing so soon awakes the malevolent passions as the facility of gratification. The courts of law would never be so crowded with petty, vexatious, and disgraceful suits, were it not for the herds of pettifoggers. These tamper with the passions of the poorer and more ignorant classes, who, as if poverty were not a sufficient misery in itself, are ever ready to imbitter it by litigation. These, like quacks in medicine, excite the malady to profit by the cure, and retard the cure to augment the fees. As the quack exhausts the constitution, the pettifogger exhausts the purse; and as he who has once been under the hands of a quack is forever after prone to dabble in drugs, and poison himself with infallible prescriptions, so the client of the pettifogger is ever after prone to embroil himself with his neighbors, and impoverish himself with successful lawsuits. My readers will excuse this digression into which I have been unwarily betrayed; but I could not avoid giving a cool and unprejudiced account of an abomination too prevalent in this excellent city, and with the effects of which I am ruefully acquainted: having been nearly ruined

by a lawsuit which was decided against me; and my ruin having been completed by another, which was decided in my favor.

To return to our theme. There was nothing in the whole range of moral offences against which the jurisprudence of William the Testy was more strenuously directed than the crying sin of poverty. He pronounced it the root of all evil, and determined to cut it up, root and branch, and extirpate it from the land. He had been struck, in the course of his travels in the old countries of Europe, with the wisdom of those notices posted up in country towns, that "any vagrant found begging there would be put in the stocks," and he had observed that no beggars were to be seen in these neighborhoods; having doubtless thrown off their rags and their poverty, and become rich under the terror of the law. He determined to improve upon this hint. In a little while a new machine, of his own invention, was erected hard by Dog's Misery. This was nothing more nor less than a gibbet, of a very strange, uncouth, and unmatchable construction, far more efficacious, as he boasted, than the stocks, for the punishment of poverty. It was for altitude not a whit inferior to that of Haman so renowned in Bible history; but the marvel of the contrivance was, that the culprit, instead

of being suspended by the neck, according to venerable custom, was hoisted by the waistband, and kept dangling and sprawling between heaven and earth for an hour or two at a time —to the infinite entertainment and edification of the respectable citizens who usually attend exhibitions of the kind.

It is incredible how the little governor chuckled at beholding caitiff vagrants and sturdy beggars thus swinging by the crupper, and cutting antic gambols in the air. He had a thousand pleasantries and mirthful conceits to utter upon these occasions. He called them his dandlelions—his wild-fowl—his high-fliers —his spread-eagles—his goshawks—his scare-crows—and finally, his *gallows-birds;* which ingenious appellation, though originally confined to worthies who had taken the air in this strange manner, has since grown to be a cant name given to all candidates for legal elevation. This punishment, moreover, if we may credit the assertions of certain grave etymologists, gave the first hint for a kind of harnessing, or strapping, by which our forefathers braced up their multifarious breeches, and which has of late years been revived, and continues to be worn at the present day.

Such was the punishment of all petty delinquents, vagrants, and beggars and others



WILLIAM THE TESTY'S CURE FOR VAGRANCY.

detected in being guilty of poverty in a small way ; as to those who had offended on a great scale, who had been guilty of flagrant misfortunes and enormous backslidings of the purse, and who stood convicted of large debts, which they were unable to pay, William Kieft had them straightway inclosed within the stone walls of a prison, there to remain until they should reform and grow rich. This notable expedient, however, does not appear to have been more efficacious under William the Testy than in more modern days : it being found that the longer a poor devil was kept in prison the poorer he grew.



Chapter VII.

PROJECTS OF WILLIAM THE TESTY FOR INCREASING THE CURRENCY—HE IS OUTWITTED BY THE YANKEES—THE GREAT OYSTER WAR.



NEXT to his projects for the suppression of poverty may be classed those of William the Testy for increasing the wealth of New Amsterdam. Solomon, of whose character for wisdom the little governor was somewhat emulous, had made gold and silver as plenty as the stones in the streets of Jerusalem. William Kieft could not pretend to vie with him as to the precious metals, but he determined, as an equivalent, to flood the streets of New Amsterdam with Indian money. This was nothing more nor less than strings of beads wrought of clams, periwinkles, and other shell-fish, and called seawant or wampum. These had formed a

native currency among the simple savages, who were content to take them of the Dutchmen in exchange for peltries. In an unlucky moment, William the Testy, seeing this money of easy production, conceived the project of making it the current coin of the province. It is true it had an intrinsic value among the Indians, who used it to ornament their robes and moccasins, but among the honest burghers it had no more intrinsic value than those rags which form the paper currency of modern days. This consideration, however, had no weight with William Kieft. He began by paying all the servants of the company, and all the debts of government, in strings of wampum. He sent emissaries to sweep the shores of Long Island, which was the Ophir of this modern Solomon, and abounded in shell-fish. These were transported in loads to New Amsterdam, coined into Indian money, and launched into circulation.

And now, for a time, affairs went on swimmingly; money became as plentiful as in the modern days of paper currency, and, to use the popular phrase, "a wonderful impulse was given to public prosperity." Yankee traders poured into the province, buying everything they could lay their hands on, and paying the worthy Dutchmen their own price—in Indian

money. If the latter, however, attempted to pay the Yankees in the same coin for their tin ware and wooden bowls, the case was altered; nothing would do but Dutch guilders and such like "metallic currency." What was worse, the Yankees introduced an inferior kind of wampum made of oyster-shells, with which they deluged the province, carrying off in exchange all the silver and gold, the Dutch herrings, and Dutch cheeses: thus early did the knowing men of the east manifest their skill in bargaining the New Amsterdammers out of the oyster, and leaving them the shell.*

It was a long time before William the Testy was made sensible how completely his grand project of finance was turned against him by his eastern neighbors; nor would he probably have ever found it out, had not tidings been brought him that the Yankees had made a descent upon Long Island, and had established

* In a manuscript record of the province, dated, 1659, Library of the New York Historical Society, is the following mention of Indian money:

"*Seawant* alias wampum. Beads manufactured from the *Quahaug* or *wilk:* a shell-fish formerly abounding on our coasts, but lately of more rare occurrence, of two colors, black and white; the former twice the value of the latter. Six beads of the white and three of the black for an English penny. The seawant depreciates from time to time. The New-

a kind of mint at Oyster Bay, where they were coining up all the oyster-banks.

Now this was making a vital attack upon the province in a double sense, financial and gastronomical. Ever since the council-dinner of Oloffe the Dreamer at the founding of New Amsterdam, at which banquet the oyster figured so conspicuously, this divine shell-fish has been held in a kind of superstitious reverence at the Manhattoes; as witness the temples erected to its cult in every street and lane and alley. In fact, it is the standard luxury of the place, as is the terrapin at Philadelphia, the soft crab at Baltimore, or the canvas-back at Washington.

The seizure of Oyster Bay, therefore, was an outrage not merely on the pockets, but the larders of the New Amsterdammers; the whole community was aroused, and an oyster crusade was immediately set on foot against the Yan-

England people make use of it as a means of barter, not only to carry away the best cargoes which we send thither, but to accumulate a large quantity of beavers and other furs; by which the company is defrauded of her revenues, and the merchants disappointed in making returns with that speed with which they might wish to meet their engagements; while their commissioners and the inhabitants remain overstocked with seawant,—a sort of currency of no value except with the New Netherland savages, etc."

kees. Every stout trencherman hastened to the standard; nay, some of the most corpulent burgomasters and schepens joined the expedition as a *corps de reserve*, only to be called into action when the sacking commenced.

The conduct of the expedition was intrusted to a valiant Dutchman, who for size and weight might have matched with Colbrand the Danish champion, slain by Guy of Warwick. He was famous throughout the province for strength of arm and skill at quarter-staff, and hence was named Stoffel Brinkerhoff, or rather Brinkerhoofd, that is to say Stoffel, the head-breaker.

This sturdy commander, who was a man of few words but vigorous deeds, led his troops resolutely on through Nineveh, and Babylon, and Jericho, and Patch-hog, and other Long Island towns, without encountering any difficulty of note; though it is said that some of the burgomasters gave out at Hardscramble Hill and Hungry Hollow, and that others lost heart and turned back at Pusspanick. With the rest he made good his march until he arrived in the neighborhood of Oyster Bay.

Here he was encountered by a host of Yankee warriors, headed by Preserved Fish, and Habakkuk Nutter, and Return Strong, and Zerubabbel Fisk, and Determined Cock!

at the sound of whose names Stoffel Brinkerhoff verily believed the whole parliament of Praise-God Barebones had been let loose upon him. He soon found, however, that they were merely the "selectmen" of the settlement, armed with no weapon but the tongue, and disposed only to meet him on the field of argument. Stoffel had but one mode of arguing, that was, with the cudgel; but he used it with such effect that he routed his antagonists, broke up the settlement, and would have driven the inhabitants into the sea if they had not managed to escape across the Sound to the mainland by the Devil's stepping-stones, which remain to this day monuments of this great Dutch victory over the Yankees.

Stoffel Brinkerhoff made great spoil of oysters and clams, coined and uncoined, and then set out on his return to the Manhattoes. A grand triumph, after the manner of the ancients, was prepared for him by William the Testy. He entered new Amsterdam as a conqueror, mounted on a Narraganset pacer. Five dried codfish on poles, standards taken from the enemy, were borne before him, and an immense store of oysters and clams, Weathersfield onions, and Yankee "notions" formed the *spolia opima;* while several coiners of



STOFFEL BRINKERHOFF.

oyster-shells were led captive to grace the hero's triumph.

The procession was accompanied by a full band of boys and negroes, performing on the popular instruments of rattle-bones and clam-shells, while Antony Van Corlear sounded his trumpet from the ramparts.

A great banquet was served up in the stadt-house from the clams and oysters taken from the enemy; while the governor sent the shells privately to the mint, and had them coined into Indian money, with which he paid his troops.

It is moreover said that the governor, calling to mind the practice among the ancients to honor their victorious general with public statutes, passed a magnanimous decree, by which every tavern-keeper was permitted to paint the head of Stoffel Brinkerhoff upon his sign!

END OF VOLUME I.





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